

Marathon Training Plan P70

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WORLD

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YOUR BEST SHAPE EVER!

Your Blueprint For A Stronger, Fitter Body

Save Your Heart With Chocolate

P13

THE 1-MINUTE INJURY FIX

(That Really Works!)

P25

THE GREAT ESCAPE

The Prisoners Running For Redemption

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Conquer Hills In 5 Simple Steps

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12 EASY WAYS TO RUN BETTER NOW!

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Gear Of The Year

*The Best Kit,
Shoes & Gadgets
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No More
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ALL NEW SUPERFOOD RECIPES







RUN GREATNESS
U L T R A **B O O S T**
RUN **N E U T R A L**

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**VOL 24
NO. 01**

Cover photography
Duncan Nicholls

Hair and makeup

Sharka

Model wears

2XU Movement Engineered

Zip Top and Mid Rise

**Compression Tights in Black/
Dotted Black reflective**



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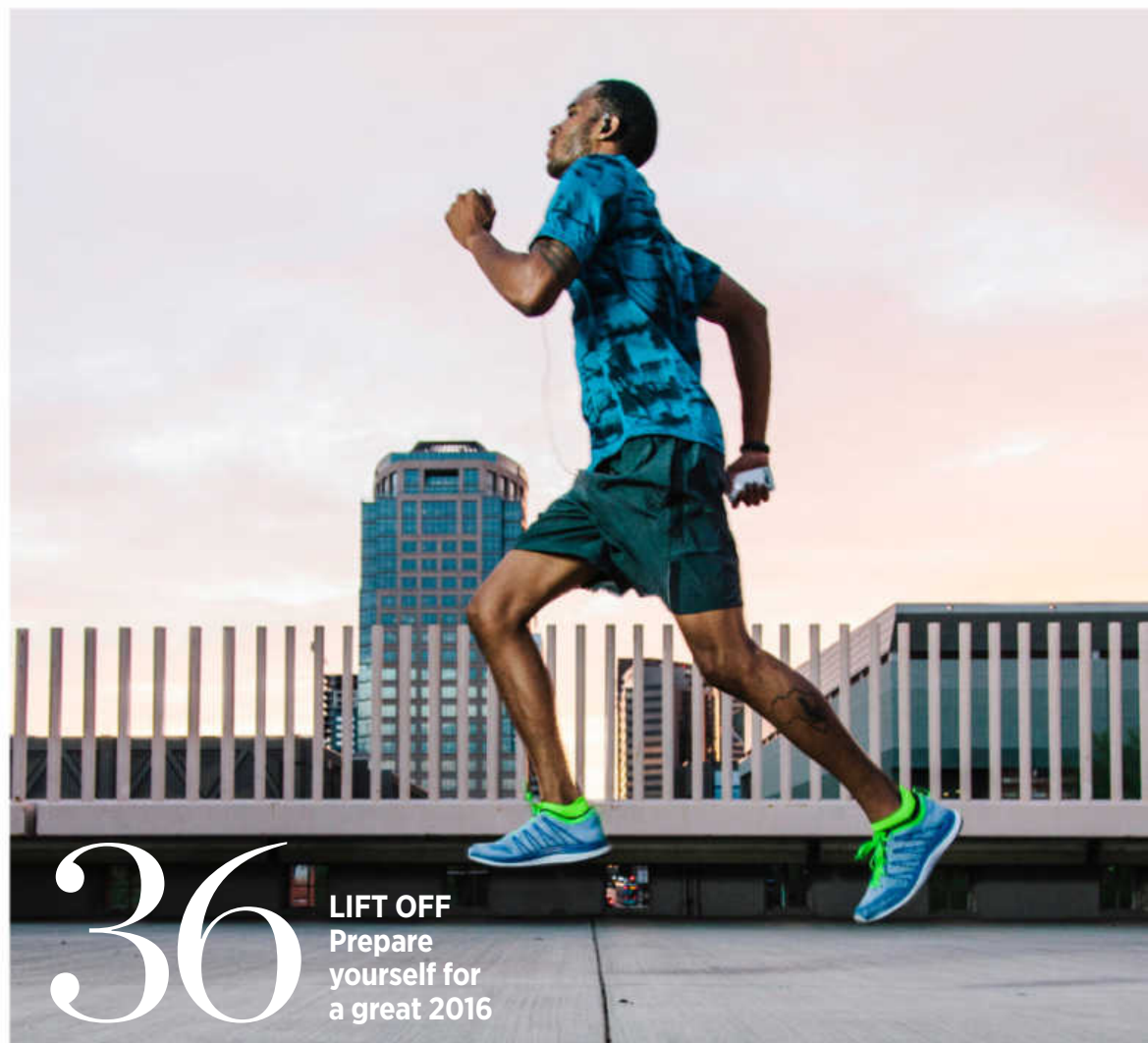
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Your perfect event for the
beginning of the year

RAVE RUN

📍 Ketchum, Idaho, US

📷 Jordan Siemens

🏃 Cari Siemens

This bridge on the Warm Springs Pathway connects runners with more than 20 miles of paved – often snow-covered – routes through this Idaho ski town. 'The cold weather doesn't keep people from getting out and enjoying the day,' says Cari.





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After plenty of strength training and Pilates, my body is rethinking its one-in, one-out policy when it comes to injury. Now I'm training for a 10-mile race – fingers crossed I make it to the start line next month.



The 10-mile Sodbury Slog is not for runners who value their dignity. Or their kit. At various points I was up to my ankles, knees, waist and chest in mud, water and... some other stuff. Did I enjoy it? I'm afraid I did.

CONTRIBUTORS



Michael Heald

The journalist and author went through a totally different kind of wall for us, going inside the Oregon State Penitentiary to race a half marathon with inmates involved in a pioneering programme that uses running to help rehabilitation. **p60**



Mark Bailey

The health and fitness journalist writes for titles as diverse as *The Financial Times* and *Men's Health*. For us this month, he used his bulging contacts book of sports science experts to bring you a blueprint for a better running body. **p36**

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FROM THE EDITOR



At the time of writing

I'm still working out what my outfit is going to be in the Christmas Handicap – the seasonal version of the three-mile dash around the Thames

that the RW team do each week with our friends from the London Marathon.

Fancy dress is encouraged. Last year I unwisely left my outfit planning to the last minute and ended up doing the race in an £8 snowman onesie. I nearly passed out after a couple of miles – due to overheating – and I think I generated so much static electricity I could have sold it back to the National Grid. That aside, it was extremely funny watching people's reactions as a horde of panting Santas and elves came bombing towards them along Embankment.

So although the festive season is one of the quieter months on the running calendar, it can also be one of the most fun. And in that spirit, we've gathered some reasons to be cheerful in this issue. On page 18, find out why your Christmas dinner is healthier than you think. And, on page 13, learn how you can help lower your risk of heart disease using only the power of chocolate (the dark stuff, mind, selection boxes don't count). You're welcome. And if you're stumped for what to get the runner in your life (or want to drop some heavy hints about what others can get you), check out our *Gear of the Year* feature (p87) and gift guide (p93): not a nylon onesie in sight. Happy Christmas!

Andy Dixon, Editor, @RW_ed Andy

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Warm ups

NEWS YOU NEED TO GET UP TO SPEED



CHOC-A-HOOP
A little of the
sweet stuff can
do you good

HEART'S DESIRE

There really is a Santa Claus. New research¹ involving more than 20,000 people shows eating chocolate is healthier than always refusing it. An intake of up to 100g a day is associated with a lower risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and cardiovascular disease-related death. Other research has shown that dark chocolate, high in flavonoid-rich cocoa, can help to reduce blood pressure and improve the function of the endothelium (the lining of the blood vessels). For healthy ways to get your chocolate fix, see pages 44 and 78.

RUN IN STOCKHOLM

*ON SATURDAY
4 JUNE 2016*

*And if you have time to look
around you will discover that
Stockholm is one of the world's
most beautiful capital cities.*

*21,500 runners
Over 100 nations
Exclusive medal
Finisher t-shirt
Average temperature
18 degrees C*

asics

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MARATHON**

stockholmmarathon.se

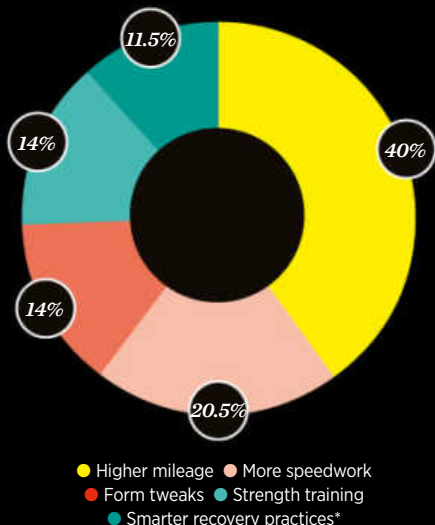
SHARP PRACTICE

Controlled pace is the general rule for runners, but all-out time trials can also pay dividends. 'They can serve as a mental boost, a training stimulus or a reality check,' says Alex Hutchinson, author of *Which comes first: cardio or weights?* (Harper). Don't hold back: start at least two per cent faster than the pace of your best recent time at your target distance. 'Fighting anaerobic fatigue trains your body to handle slower paces more efficiently,' says Hutchinson. Schedule one or two speed tests, the last at least two weeks before your race.

TARGET RACE	SUGGESTED TIME TRIAL DISTANCE
5K-10K	1-1.5 miles
Half marathon to marathon	5K to 5 miles

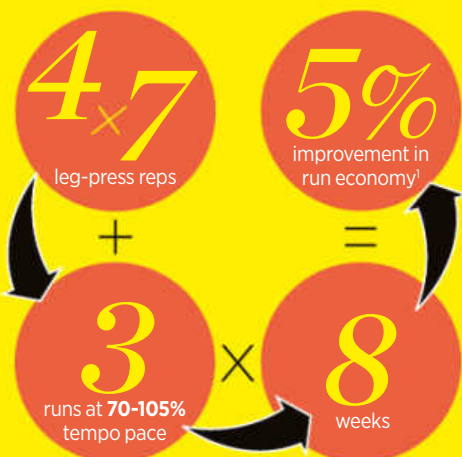
Poll position

What made the most difference to your running in 2015?



Run maths

Economy drive



SPARKS WILL FLY
Add a tough test to your long-distance training

Take it to the limit

Know your threshold

Improving lactate threshold (LT) is a good way of getting faster. (LT is the point at which lactate levels in the muscles rise sharply – the body can't clear it quickly enough). And a new study² says you can get an idea of your LT by rating your level of effort out of 10. In the study, runners ran at a gradually increasing pace while their blood lactate and perceived exertion levels were monitored. When lactate reached 4mmol (indicating LT), they rated their effort at 6.5 out of 10.

1. Rest, almost no exertion
2. Very light
3. Light
4. Easy to moderate
5. Moderate
6. Somewhat hard
7. Hard
8. Very hard
9. Very, very hard
10. Maximum exertion

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SHAKE IT OFF

If you are forever supping protein shakes, taking pills or stirring powders in pursuit of fitness, it could be time to take stock. A study presented at the American Psychological Association's annual convention found the behaviour of an increasing number of sport supplement users matched those of eating disorder sufferers. Of the 195 men involved in the study, 40 per cent said their supplement usage was steadily increasing, 22 per cent regularly replaced meals with supplements, just under a third were concerned about their intake and almost one in 10 had been advised to lower their intake by a medical professional.

SHAKE DOWN
Time to go easy
on the sports
supplements

Words **Sam Murphy** Photography **Claire Benoist, Getty** 1. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition



Try this Tribe pack

(from £6.50 per week, wearetribe.co)

Tribe brightens up Mondays with its weekly delivery of five healthy snacks geared towards runners. Each pack includes savoury and sweet offerings, such as spiced seeds, trail mix and energy bars. You'll also get tips, such as when best to eat what, or how to use one of the foods in a recipe.

17

PERCENTAGE BY WHICH
TIME TO EXHAUSTION
WAS EXTENDED IN A
TEST WHEN AS LITTLE
AS 25ML OF WATER WAS
SWALLOWED FREQUENTLY
BY TRAINED ATHLETES.



Muscle in on age

Omega-3s maintain strength

Fish oil can help preserve muscle mass and strength as we age, shows new research.¹ When older adults took a fish oil supplement equivalent to the omega-3s in 200-400g of salmon or sardines for six months, muscle strength improved by six per cent more than in those who took a placebo of corn oil. Muscle volume increased 3.5 per cent more than in the placebo group. Resistance training has a similar effect, but given the other benefits of fish-derived fatty acids, doing both could be the best option.



FEAST YOUR EYES ON THIS

Festive fare may be healthier than you think, says sports nutritionist Dr Karen Reid (performancefood.co.uk)



Turkey

A 170g portion has just 240kcal and 4g of fat, but a hefty 44g of protein. Turkey is also a source of beta-alanine, which, converted to carnosine, delays muscle fatigue during hard exercise.



Cranberries

They are high in proanthocyanidins, antioxidants that help strengthen capillaries, improve blood pressure and protect against vascular diseases and cancers.



Brussels sprouts

Sprouts have more glucosinolates – phytochemicals with anti-cancer properties – than their cruciferous cousins, including kale. They're also a good source of vitamin C, folic acid and fibre.



Chestnuts

With only 2.7g of fat, 170kcal and 8.1g of fibre per 100g, these pack a punch. Unlike other nuts, chestnuts are a good source of carbohydrate and pack 43mg of vitamin C per 100g.



Red Cabbage

It's rich in anthocyanins, which boost brain function and support heart health. Its high fibre content acts as a natural prebiotic, encouraging the growth of beneficial gut bacteria.



Potatoes

An unsung nutritional hero: it contains very little sodium and is a source of fibre, potassium, vitamin C and B vitamins, especially B6, essential for a healthy nervous system.



Christmas pudding

Packed with dried fruit, it's a great source of carbs and fibre. Raisins can be as effective as energy gels in fuelling endurance training, and they also contain iron and magnesium.

BAR?

WHERE DO YOU SET THE

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harmony 



How I ran it off

‘I HAVE SO MUCH ENERGY!’

My old life

I have five children.

I had my first when I was 17 and my fifth in 2012. I gained weight during each pregnancy and never got rid of it.

I did no exercise. I had never taken exercise seriously in my life.

I got into bad eating habits. We had takeaway meals regularly. I'd eat the kids' leftovers and I snacked on cake.

I was a size 18. At only 5ft 3in I looked huge.

I wore dark, baggy clothes to hide myself.

The turnaround

I was horrified when I saw myself in some Christmas photos in 2012.

They showed how big I'd become. In January 2013 I joined a Slimming World class.

I realised if I became more active I would lose more weight. So instead of driving I pushed my little ones in the double buggy while I walked my older children to school. I lost a pound a week.

I tried a run after I'd lost over a stone. I came home and collapsed on the carpet, exhausted. Then I started a couch-to-5K plan and found I really enjoyed running.

I set myself a goal of 9st 7lb. I reached that in nine months but I was enjoying how I felt, so I carried on.

My first race was a Santa Dash. I discovered I was quite competitive – and I was the first woman over the line.

I was thrilled to get one of Slimming World's places to run the 2015 London Marathon. The training was tough, but it kept the weight off. Race day was one of the best days of my life.

The future

I run most days and do circuit training. And yet I've got so much more energy! I have more races in the diary, including an obstacle adventure race.

I feel like a completely different person than I was three years ago.

I have discovered something I love, which, along with better eating habits, keeps my weight down.

I now lead Slimming World classes. I tell the members how great running is. Some have been inspired to take it up. It's great to see others start loving it and changing their lives, too.

*Name Emma**Scarborough**Age 37**Hometown Donington, Lincolnshire**Weight before 13st 4lb**Weight now 8st 7lb**Weight lost 4st 11lb*

Emma's top tips

How she became a new woman



If you're a busy mum, don't overthink your running. Just do your best.



Start the day with fruit, not sugary cereals. Bananas, pineapple and berries are great.



Use stats from apps such as RunKeeper (or a GPS watch) to inspire you to push yourself further.



A marathon doesn't have to be your goal; even doing a Parkrun is a great target to aim for.

PARK LIFE

Start your post-run routine with CB12, a mouthwash that is your fast track to fresh, confident breath and a healthy smile

For most of us, whatever our running routine, – early morning sprint, post-work jog home, weekend scamper – squeezing in a dose of cardio is a must. Armed with just our running essentials (no extra kit required), pounding the pavement is something we look forward to. Freshening up post-run matters too, and that's even easier now, thanks to CB12, the mouthwash that neutralises unpleasant breath and is ideal for daily use. Better still, it works fast and in a recent trial a whopping two thirds of people found CB12 gave them more confidence in their breath.* Refreshed and revived, you can now face the day with unstoppable confidence.

70%

OF PEOPLE
IN THE TRIAL
LIKE THE
TASTE OF
CB12

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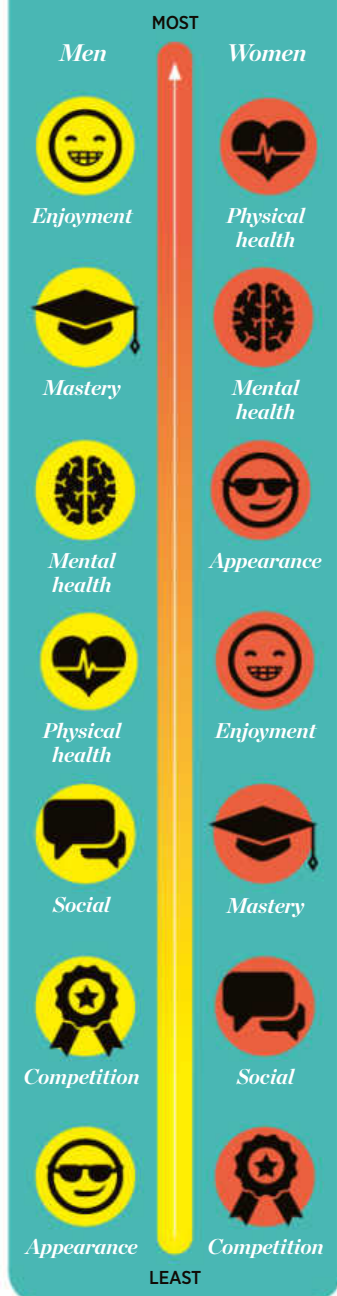


“A strong, minty flavour initially, which mellowed to a refreshing, pleasant aftertaste. Throughout the trial my teeth felt much less ‘coated’ during the day, I was very impressed.”

**Emma, 38,
Loughborough**

Sex drive

Men and women's motivation to exercise differs, shows a new study¹



MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

Planning to take root on the sofa over the festive period? Think twice: researchers at the University of Copenhagen have discovered that just two weeks of inactivity can result in a massive decline in muscle strength. The study involved immobilising one leg of each subject for a fortnight. In younger subjects, the inability to use the leg caused them to lose up to one third of their muscle strength, while older people lost around a quarter. Regaining the lost strength and muscle mass proved to be no easy task – even with regular cycling and strength training, it took three times as long to rebuild as it had taken to lose.

Instant wisdom

‘Acknowledge all of your small victories. They will eventually add up to something great.’

Kara Goucher, US long-distance runner

3

NUMBER OF HOURS OF UNINTERRUPTED SITTING THAT DAMAGES BLOOD VESSELS IN THE LEGS.²

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Marty Jerome, £10.41

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Complete Running Diary

Sebastian Elliott, £6.29

You can enter mileage, time, route, weather and even how you felt in this 52-week training log.



Believe Training Journal

Lauren Fleshman, £13.99

US elite runner Fleshman's female-focused, undated journal is sprinkled with inspirational quotes and advice.



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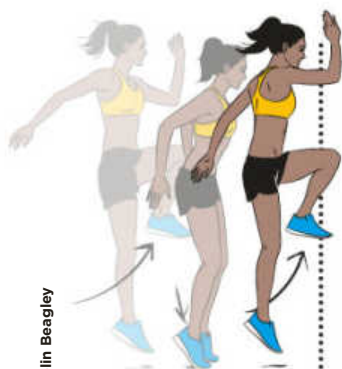
Join the conversation
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CUT AND STRIDE

Want an easy way to cut injuries? Shorten your stride. Researchers from Iowa State University, US, looked at some key variables associated with injury, such as pelvic drop, internal knee rotation and hip adduction. They found a shorter stride helped minimise these. Physio Chris Bramah, who runs the Running Performance Clinic at Salford University (runningperformanceclinic.com) uses a range of drills to help runners reduce overstriding: 'Try the three below before running to stimulate the correct movement patterns. Doing drills pre-run also helps the skill transfer to your running technique.'

SHEER BLISS
A shorter stride
can help keep
you on the road



Single skips

Take a skip forward, aiming for height; but instead of going into the next skip, land with both feet and then take off on the other foot. Aim to react quickly off your feet. Do 2-3 sets of 10m.




Ankling

Running tall, pick up your feet in a circular motion and then move forward, keeping your feet low (ankle height) and your stride short and fast. Do 2-3 sets of 10-20m.



High knees, heels to bum

Run with a tall posture, bringing your knees up, and drawing the heel under the bottom and toes towards your shins. Do 2-3 sets of 10-20m.



Try this Flexiseq Sport

£19.99 for 50g,
treatmentsdirect.com

In a study this drug-free gel eased exercise-induced muscle soreness faster than a painkiller when both were used twice daily for a week. It transports phospholipids (fat molecules) to joints, where they help to replenish worn cartilage and lubricate joint movement.



Lucky rabbit's foot

Massage worked wonders on exhausted rabbits

It's hard to discount the placebo effect of a good rubdown, which is why some scientists remain sceptical about the physical benefits of massage. A new study attempted to do so by swapping human subjects for rabbits. All the rabbits 'exercised' one leg, and then received either no massage, a massage straight after exercise, or a massage after 24 or 48 hours. When the researchers looked to see how the muscles responded, they found that 14 per cent more new blood vessels had formed in the massaged muscles and there was only half as much scar tissue compared with muscles that had received no massage.

£126

THE AVERAGE 'COST' OF A RUNNING INJURY, SAID A STUDY LOOKING AT RUNNERS TRAINING FOR AN EVENT, DUE TO HEALTHCARE COSTS AND ABSENTEEISM.



REAL RUNNERS. INSPIRATIONAL STORIES



HUMAN RACE



‘I THINK IT’S BEST TO BE OPEN’

On the long journey to becoming a transgender woman, running did far more for **Megan Key** than just keep her fit

Twenty years ago, Megan Key was an overweight smoker who partied hard, drank too much and took recreational drugs.

She was also a man – a deeply unhappy one. Today, the 41-year-old transgender woman has four marathons under her belt and couldn't be happier. 'I can't tell you how important running has been in keeping me alive and well,' she says. 'It's been a fundamental part of my transition into the woman I am today.'

Megan is so passionate about exercise that she has launched a social media campaign, #transgirlscan, to encourage more transgender women to try sport. 'Transgender people are more likely to suffer physical and mental health problems,' she says. 'Exercise can help, but a lot of exercise environments pose problems: there are issues with clothing, changing rooms and gender identification. That's why running is so great – you can put on a hat and sunnies and go straight out your front door. That's empowering. My message with #transgirlscan is that anything is something.'

Megan, who is a regional manager for the National Probation Service in Birmingham, always knew that she was different. 'As a child, I didn't know what transgender was but I knew I didn't fit in at the all-boys school I went to.' By 18, she weighed 15 stone and was suffering from depression. 'I was put on Prozac and referred to a counsellor, who diagnosed gender dysphoria – which meant my mind was not happy with my body. They talked about the idea I might be transgender – a male body and a female mind. I told no-one; it was too painful.'

Instead, she sought comfort in food, drink and drugs. 'Occasionally I'd get drunk and confide in someone – but I felt immense fear and pressure all the time.'

When Megan was 28, she travelled through Asia and Australia, where she adopted a healthier lifestyle. 'I set myself a goal of one year to lose weight. Through diet and exercise I shed seven stone.'

She returned to the UK in 2004, lighter physically but still carrying the burden of gender dysphoria. Her fears of coming out as trans publicly were so great that she contemplated killing herself.

Her GP diagnosed agitated depression, a combination of anxiety and depression. 'He talked about the mental health benefits of regular exercise and said, "Why don't you try running?" so I signed up for a fun run with a friend. Running proved surprisingly addictive. It helped me take control of my body; how I looked and how physically and emotionally strong I felt. When it seemed other things were beyond my control, running was the

'Running helped me take control of my body'

one thing that I did for me, and I could see and feel the progress I was making.'

Megan was soon running 40 miles a week and in 2007 she signed up for the New York Marathon. She went on to run marathons in Paris, London and Berlin. 'I found the long runs meditative,' she says. 'I finally felt I was in a healthy place.'

So much so that, in 2010, Megan finally told her mum and dad that she was transgender and was going to transition to being a woman. 'My family were great,' she says. 'They've been so supportive.'

By 2012, there was only one place where Megan was not openly trans – the office. 'I was putting on a suit and going to work as a man,' she says. 'It was very stressful.'

Megan had been in discussion with the HR department for two years before she felt ready to come out. 'It took that long to take the plunge,' she says. Finally, one Friday at 5pm, Megan wrote an email announcing to her colleagues she was a transgender woman and was changing her name to Megan. 'I pressed 'send' and ran out the door!' By Saturday her inbox

was filling up with messages of support and congratulations. 'I wondered why I'd waited all those years,' she says.

The support Megan experienced could not have come at a better time because her running was about to hit a roadblock. 'I'd been overtraining and I had bone bruising in both my legs,' she says. 'I was advised to stop for a bit or risk permanent damage, but I tried to battle through for a few months. It was really tough because I was on hormone treatment, which made me gain weight and lose muscle mass. Eventually I had to give in and let things heal. I cycled to maintain fitness.'

Happily, Megan is now back in her running shoes. Earlier this year, she was in Liverpool for the LGBT Pride festival, and joined a 10K run from the Nike store around Liverpool Dock. 'I was the only openly trans person there, running with dozens of people I didn't know, and everyone was so friendly,' she says.

'When I first started transitioning, three years ago, I'd never have run with a group, as I worried what people would think. My journey has been one of acceptance.' Megan is keen to share her experiences because, she says, there are so few trans people in the public arena. 'I think it's best to be open so people can learn. I say, "My name is Megan and I'm a she".'

Megan also visits schools and talks about transphobia and homophobia for national charity Diversity Role Models. In September, she was thrilled to win an award for being a positive LGBT Role Model at the National Diversity Awards. 'We don't need people to feel sorry for us – we just need people to acknowledge and accept that we're part of society,' she says. 'There's a lot more to me than being transgender. I'm a successful businesswoman, an advocate, educator and, of course, a passionate runner.'

justgiving.com/megskey



PROUD MOMENT
Megan with
friends after the
Liverpool Nike 10K

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DARE TO BARE
Aleks thinks it's
all perfectly normal



WHAT IT TAKES TO...

Run Britain barefoot

With school out for summer, science teacher **Aleks Kashefi** had just six weeks to achieve his aim of running from Land's End to John O'Groats (Lejog), unsupported. A tall order on its own, but the 37-year-old from Buxton planned to run all 1,162 miles barefoot.

'I prefer running barefoot because I'm more aware of my form,' he says. Aleks covered an average of 30 miles a day as he made his way north, carrying his gear on his back and pitching up to 'wild camp' each night. 'I would battle with tiredness, navigation, lack of shops or food and then arrive at the day's resting spot, pitch up, kick back and enjoy the endorphins,' he says.

But it wasn't all plain sailing. Just five days in, he developed tendinitis in his foot. 'I thought the run was down the pan, but I carried on as best I could.' Aleks was raising money for the Stroke Association, so he was loath to give up. (His mother had a stroke at an early age and his grandfather died in 2013

following multiple strokes). Luckily, the foot problem vanished after a couple of weeks.

Running through rural Britain meant Aleks didn't always have access to proper nutrition. 'I sometimes managed to get farm eggs or wild berries, but often I got by on pies, pasties and pork scratchings,' he says. 'I needed less and less fuel

to get myself from A to B. My body adapted to give me what I needed.'

Aleks's feet, however, took a beating. 'I got a fair-sized cut in my foot from glass, and in Scotland the ground was extremely cold and wet,' he says. He sometimes had to don 'minimal' Lunar sandals. 'But I still covered 883 miles of the run barefoot,' he says.

Aleks completed Lejog in 38 days – with just three rest days along the way. 'It was an incredible experience and I've never felt as fit in my life,' he says. 'I'm in awe of what the human body is capable of.'



● justgiving.com/barefootlejog/



FOOT REST
Aleks takes
the weight off

Find new guidelines for running



TEAM WORKS
Roz and Alison

When **Alison Mead** lost her sight following a brain haemorrhage, she thought her running days were over. 'I'd always been active, but sport no longer seemed an option,' says the 53-year-old from Hertfordshire. But she contacted British Triathlon and they put her in touch with a volunteer, **Roz McGinty**. They soon decided one sport made more sense than three and chose running.

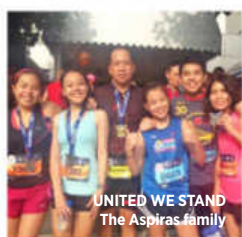
'I had no training as a guide but I had Alison, who was a brilliant teacher,' says Roz, 43. The pair practised on a disused railway path to get used to running together, carrying a device with a handle at either end. 'I tried to describe the terrain and any holes or puddles coming up,' says Roz.

In November 2014 Roz guided Alison on her first Parkrun, in St Albans. 'We were buzzing afterwards,' says Roz. Alison was hooked: 'I immediately wanted to do another one,' she says. 'So I was delighted when a Parkrun started within walking distance of my home in South Oxhey.'

A local running club now coordinates a list of volunteers (including Roz) to guide Alison and look after her guide dog, Ted – and she hasn't missed a single Saturday. 'My advice to any visually impaired person who wants to try running is to do a Parkrun. Running is so great, physically and mentally.' Roz is equally enthusiastic: 'I cannot recommend guiding enough – it is so rewarding,' she says.

● Want to volunteer? Sign up to the Big Help Out, joininuk.org

INBOX



UNITED WE STAND
The Aspiras family

Family first

Running my first marathon was always going to result in a personal best. I thought nothing would better the feeling, but I realised that running with my family was even more satisfying. My wife, Gemma, and kids Bea and Pat finished the half marathon, while our other children, Ryan and Marga, did the 10K. Aside from making us healthy, running has become our bonding time together, making us a stronger family. The event we did was aptly named: RunUnited.

Cris Aspiras, Pasig City, Philippines

Foot fault

It's good to see you including yoga postures in your fitness programmes (50 Best Moves, RW, Nov) but wearing shoes when doing these exercises does little to bring awareness to a runner's most important supporters – the feet.

Linda McCullough, East Grinstead, W Sussex

Bare coverage

I love *Runner's World*, but there's something

important missing from your coverage – barefoot running. I took up running six months ago, first introducing barefoot walking, then running. Within four months I was able to do a road half marathon. I'm sure there are others who would like to see more articles, tips and stories about barefoot running. **Blaž Erzetič, Nova Gorica, Slovenia**
RW says Read Aleks Kashefi's remarkable barefoot-running story on p29

The fine art of running

I took up distance running this year and I've become so taken with it that I decided to incorporate it into my art. We hear a lot about the wall that stops runners, but my painting explores what spurs us on when fatigue sets in. I chose a shark because it is nature's perfectly engineered example of speed, power and streamlined grace. To imagine the most feared of all predators on our trail would drive us on.

Paul Brown, Barnsley, South Yorkshire



LETTER OF THE MONTH



IN THE GENES
Andrew with his father, Paul

FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

Six months ago I grabbed my trainers and decided to go for a run. I was motivated by the fact that my dad had started running a couple of months earlier. I saw him improving and I couldn't let him get ahead. I ran my first 5K in 27:36. Eighteen Parkruns and 235km later, my 5K PB is 20:54.

I never saw myself as a runner, but I've realised anyone can do it. Give it a try – you may surprise yourself.

Andrew Kettle (15), Salisbury, Wiltshire

I often see runners queuing for the loo behind non-runners before a race. Why don't organisers put up signs asking non-runners to give priority to runners?

Darrell Dunscombe, Troon, Scotland

RW says Does the loo queue bother you? Let us know



21

per cent of letters responded to Dave Comeau's query about nose-clearing etiquette. (RW, Dec)

'Constantly having to dodge flying boogers from runners ahead is irritating and offputting.'
Charleigh Best, Ledbury.

1

letter suggested runners returning from injury should wear a bib with a 'B' on it, standing for 'back from injury.'

3

readers told us that running has given them new respect for their bodies.

What's inspired or annoyed you this month? The writer of the winning letter will receive a pair of Saucony ProGrid Hurricane 16 shoes, worth £110.*

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Tim Noakes

The sports scientist on how the brain governs our running and why he's still courting controversy

Professor Tim Noakes is a household name in running science, thanks to his book *Lore of Running*, now in its fourth edition. The South African has been a leader in sports science for over 30 years, challenging conventional wisdom about many aspects of running. He has also run more than 70 marathons and ultra events. The 66-year-old has caused controversy by promoting a high-fat, low-carb diet in his latest book, *The Real Meal Revolution*.

What led you into sport science?

I discovered endurance sport and science in my first year at medical school and loved both. I wasn't interested in disease – only in health.

Why have you been critical of exercise science?

The problem with the exercise sciences is the influence of industry in directing what research can be easily funded. For example, carbohydrate and fluid intake during exercise has been so well funded not to discover the truth, but to promote the sale of carbohydrate-containing products. Exercise sciences need to find sources of funding that genuinely want to determine the outcome of the research.

What led you to develop the Central Governor Model? [Noakes's theory that exercise performance is not limited by muscle fatigue, but regulated by the brain.] During VO_2 -max testing, we could not find the so-called 'plateau phenomenon' in oxygen uptake. Without that, there was no reason to believe oxygen was limiting maximal performance.

I realised this in the 1980s, but it took me 10 years to deduce that the brain must be directing exercise performance to ensure that we do not harm ourselves during demanding exercise.

Can this insight help us race better?

Yes. If you acknowledge that fatigue is purely an emotion that has no relation to your actual physical condition, there is never any excuse to quit.

Do you experiment on yourself?

I always use myself as a test subject. I'm currently trying to learn how to manage my type 2 diabetes, finding the optimum combination of diet, exercise, medication and nutritional supplements to return my blood glucose control to normal.

How are you perceived in your field?

I'm either loved as someone who has made a real difference to the exercise sciences or seen as a quack. This has been especially true in South Africa since I began promoting the high-fat Banting diet [named after William Banting, who popularised the diet in 1860s London].

What led you to adopt that diet?

Within two hours of opening *The New*

Atkins for the New You, I realised I had got it all wrong by promoting the high-carbohydrate diet. Despite all my running, I still developed profound insulin resistance – type 2 diabetes – and I knew the authors' dietary advice was crucial to my future health.

What's been the response to your U-turn on the subject?

It has sparked a national debate in South Africa – some support the Banting diet and others believe it will cause an epidemic of obesity and heart disease. My new book has broken publishing records in South Africa and since its publication there's been a national cauliflower shortage [the vegetable features strongly in Banting recipes] and bread sales in one large supermarket chain have fallen by 30 per cent.

What benefits does it offer runners?

Ease of weight control, because one is never really hungry. More energy and stronger finishes in marathons and longer races. And no need to worry about carbohydrate gels during exercise. In the next decade, I believe this eating plan will become the default, and the high-carbohydrate diet will be followed only by those who are so insulin-sensitive they're at no risk of developing diabetes.

Do you still run?

I run five to 10km most days and I race no further than half marathons. I love my running as much as ever, even though I'm slow now. I still imagine the day when I'll run fast again. I was born optimistic.

● *The Real Meal Revolution* (Robinson, £20) is out now

OUT THERE
Tim Noakes is still challenging orthodox thinking





RUNNING COMMENTARY

THOUGHT
THAT
COUNTS



‘If the one true way existed, it would be set in stone’

In our quest for improvement, we runners are always searching for the ‘one true way’ to do things best. And there are plenty of coaches, nutritionists and sport scientists to tell us what that one true way is.

So we heed their advice and end up with a running rulebook, of sorts, which tells us that to achieve X, Y or Z the definitive prescription is A, B or C. The conviction is appealing, but the rules keep changing. And each time they do, they negate all previous absolutes, implying they were wrong all along.

A few years back the one true way to prepare for a run was to do some static stretching. Now, it’s frowned upon. The way to do long runs was slowly and steadily. Now we balance the prolonged plod with progression runs, marathon-pace miles and fast finishes. Look back further and you’ll find a time when drinking water during a marathon was considered a terrible mistake, likely to play havoc with your guts.

It’s tempting to look at such past certainties and think, ‘Ah, we know better now,’ but don’t think for a second we’ve reached a point where our knowledge is unimpeachable.

Take diet. For years, the one true way to fuel runs has been with carbs. But many scientists (including Professor Tim Noakes, whom we interview on p31) now believe that a high-fat diet, with minimal carbs, is better. And we’re not talking omega-3 fats here: butter, cheese, cream and fatty meats are all back on the menu. Energy gels are off.



And what about training? The ‘hard-easy’ rule – alternating hard and easy workouts throughout your week – has been challenged by the research of Dr Stephen Seiler, from the University of Agder in Norway. His studies have led him to suggest that 80:20 training – in which the bulk of your mileage (yep, 80 per cent) is run at an easy intensity – is better for improving performance.

How about running form? For the past few years the forefoot strike has been touted as the one true way to optimal form; however, this kind of footstrike eludes three quarters of runners, as you may have found if you tried to make the adjustment.

The stark fact is, if the one true way really existed, it would be set in stone – it would not be forever changing. And runners who haven’t

followed it would never have reached their potential.

How could Paula Radcliffe have set the marathon world record without the benefit of the high-fat diet? (Her pre-race breakfast was a carb-fest of porridge, banana and honey.) And how could Meb Keflezighi have won the 2014 Boston Marathon with his apparently inefficient heel-striking form?

You could argue these runners have the talent to do well regardless of the path they follow. But my experience as runner and coach leads me to conclude there is more than one way to skin a cat. Three-week marathon tapers leave some runners stale. Eccentric calf raises don’t solve all Achilles problems. A cadence of 180 steps per minute doesn’t make everyone’s running more efficient. We’re all different, and there’s a burgeoning body of research to prove it.

A 2013 study at Derby Royal Hospital looked at the effects of 20 weeks of strength training on younger and older adults. Though participants followed the same programme, muscle-size increases varied from three to 28 per cent, and around a quarter of those involved gained no muscle mass at all. Age and gender were not factors, pointing to the effect of genes.

And a study in the *American Journal of Human Genetics* suggests the variation you have of the ACTN-3 gene determines whether you’ll benefit more from focusing on high-intensity sprints or speed endurance in training. With individual differences built in from birth, the idea that we should all follow the same road to reach the same destination seems less and less convincing.

As runners yearning to improve, then, our mission isn’t necessarily to be always at the cutting edge. Rather, it’s to have the good sense to understand what works for you and the confidence to stick with it. That’s the one true way.

Speedy
stat

6

The average number of pounds dieters have kept off after a year, according to a review of 53 studies

● Sam Murphy tweets @SamMurphyRuns



‘The biscuit aisle will be off limits. There’s no glory there’

It has become clear to me that most conversations that veer into the territory of advice ultimately become conversations with the self. A few weeks back, midway through our weekly forest trot, my mate confessed to being slightly jaded with his running: a few days earlier, in fact, he had simply not wanted to go out. Apparently, this had never happened before and it had, understandably, left the poor chap a tad perturbed.

Like everyone in a long-term relationship with running I have some experience in this area and so I assumed the role of agony uncle and began to offer my advice on his recent loss of passion. One of the problems, it seemed to me, was that he’d reached the end of his first fling with running, what I termed ‘the infatuation phase’. His love affair began roughly four years ago. He ran his first 5Ks and 10Ks. He lost weight. He felt great. Alive. The distances grew and then there was the exultation of his first marathon, with the pre-race pack, the wall, the medal, the hero’s welcome. There were more marathons, more PBs, running still a giving lover. Then came the inevitable plateau, the boredom, niggles, slower times and the terrible realisation that he might never run faster.

To maintain the spark in the relationship he would have to, I offered, run smarter. He needed more quality, to run longer when running long and faster when running short. Not just running, but

‘training’. And when not running he’d have to eat better, rest better and drink less. All the boring stuff that makes all the difference.

But who exactly was I advising? I’ve been running about 30 miles a week for a while and so I’m in fairly good shape for my 46 years. But there’s an unwanted kink in my outline, a persistent band of flesh encircling my belly, a hula-hoop of useless flab slowing me down. I’m running London in April and in a moment of clarity I realised that I want to run it well. To do so, the flab band will have to go. As I heard Sir Alex Ferguson say recently, the details point to the mountain. The mountain is a fast time at London. The details are numerous.

Bread will have to go, and so will mopping up the leftovers after Sunday lunches: no scavenging the kids’ roast potatoes – and leave the chicken carcass alone. The biscuit aisle will be off limits. There’s no glory there. I once thought I’d found a biscuit loophole when I heard that Rio Ferdinand ate Jaffa Cakes at half time but, of course, he didn’t wolf down the whole packet and he was halfway through a football match, not an episode of *Homeland*. Then there’s wine. I’ve cut down, a lot, but more surgery is needed if I want to crack open the celebratory fizzy variety come April.

The most important thing of all, of course, is running. Once again, I’m going to have to get used to running fast when I’m tired – that’s what racing is. And it’s going to hurt.

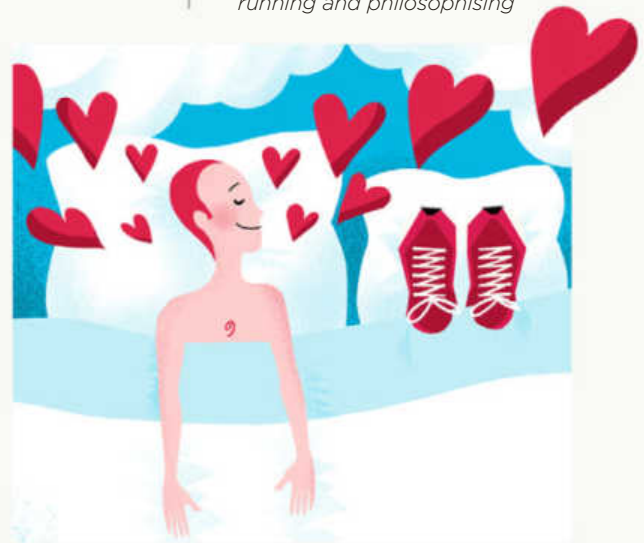
Runnerpedia

(S)mile repeats
(n) Those rare speedwork sessions where your form stays fluid and the splits come easy.

So on Monday I didn’t run my usual measured seven-and-half-miler at my normal steady pace. I set off moderately, then ramped it up for the second half. It was hard, and different, and really rather amazing. My thoughts were less random, I wasn’t free-associating with nature, adrift in an oceanic reverie. I spent most of the time focusing on form, lost in motion, remembering what it felt like to push harder for longer, the tiredness in my arms (note to self: do press-ups), the tightness in the chest, a vague nausea, the burning in the thighs, but also the good stuff: long periods of flow, the sudden surges of power, reservoirs of hidden energy accessible once the will is there. I finished strong, eight minutes faster than usual. I noted the time in my diary as a mark to improve on next time.

And I can’t wait for next time. Thanks to some sage and timely advice, that old passion for running is flowing again. My 46-year-old silhouette may still have an unwanted curve in the middle, but I’m pointing to the mountain.

● Paul Tonkinson is a standup comedian who spends his time running and philosophising



‘I really like cross-country; you’re one with the mud.’

Lynn Jennings, three-time World Cross-Country champion

‘The start of a World Cross-Country event is like riding a horse in the middle of a buffalo stampede... one slip and you’re nothing but hoofprints.’

Ed Eyestone, two-time Olympian

‘I love running cross-country. On the track, I feel like a hamster.’

Robin Williams, actor

‘Cross-country keeps me off the streets.’

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T

he year is drawing to an end and your race calendar shows some lean weeks ahead, so now is the right time to take stock, assess your body's

balance sheet and devise a plan that will enable you to achieve more in 2016.

You already put in the miles – the long runs, tempo runs, hill work and speedwork – that build your stamina, but are you doing the body work your well-tuned engine deserves? The simple self-tests you'll find on the following pages provide the tools for a comprehensive assessment of your running body, with self-analysis in nine key areas that are essential for efficient running. They will help you to identify the areas you need to work on; you can then use the relevant exercises to ensure your body is primed to deliver optimum, injury-free running performance next year. Think of it as a blueprint for your Running Body 2.0.

YOUR SCORE (KEY)

● Attention required ● Average
● Good ● Excellent



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1

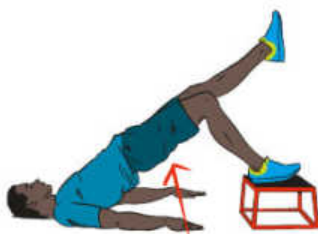
UPPER LEG/
GLUTE
STRENGTH

WHY IT MATTERS Strong glutes hold your pelvis steady as you run and power you forward, but they are often weak or misfiring in runners. 'Glutes function as hip extensors, pulling the leg through when you run, to produce forward motion,' explains performance scientist Ian Pyper of the English Institute of Sport (eis2win.co.uk). They're also shock absorbers. 'Every stride puts huge force through the legs and because the hip joint is a ball and socket, it is very vulnerable without strong glutes to dissipate and absorb that force.'

TEST

BENT-LEG SINGLE-LEG
HIP LIFT

Lie on your back, place your right heel on a 30-40cm box, then bend your right knee to form a right angle between your upper and lower leg. Now lift your left leg straight out in front. Push down into your right heel and raise your hips until there is a straight line between your knees and shoulders. Lower and repeat, counting your maximum reps, then repeat with the other leg. 'This tests for glute and hamstring strength endurance and any muscle imbalances,' says Pyper.



YOUR SCORE (reps per leg)

● 0-19 ● 20+ ● 30+ ● 50+

IMPROVE



DOUBLE-LEG HIP LIFT

A Lie on your back, feet flat on the floor, legs bent and knees above your ankles. Place your hands by your sides for balance. **B** Raise your hips until there is a straight line between your knees and shoulders. Lower and repeat. Do 3 x 20 reps. (If your test score indicated a muscle imbalance, you can also train your weaker leg with single-leg hip lifts, keeping one leg straight out in front as you lift.)

SWISS BALL
HAMSTRING CURL

'This builds glute strength and the balance element boosts your form,' says Pyper. 'Go slowly through the eccentric (lowering) phase to develop your balance and strength.'

A Lie on your back with your feet resting on a Swiss ball and your arms flat on the floor for balance.

B Use your legs to roll the ball towards you, but don't let your hips sag. Do 3 x 12 reps.

2

CORE
STRENGTH

WHY IT MATTERS A strong core supports smooth, stable running biomechanics, while a soggy middle will hamper your form and sap your energy, compromising performance and increasing your injury risk. 'Strong abdominals help you transfer force as you run,' says personal trainer Ben Camara of No.1 Fitness in London (bencamara.com). 'They also keep your hips in line and stop your chest dropping so your running form doesn't fail as you tire.'



3

BALANCE AND STABILITY

WHY IT MATTERS 'If you can stay balanced when you run, you will have a stronger posture through your legs, pelvis, spine and head, which encourages better running form,' says Dr Ian Horsley, physiotherapist at Back In Action in Wakefield (backinactionltd.co.uk). 'Balance also enhances muscle recruitment so you stay stable. Without it, you'll waste energy, resulting in inefficient form and more fatigue.' In the long term that won't just push up the digits on your finish times – it'll leave you more susceptible to injury.

TEST

STAR-EXCURSION BALANCE TEST

Use chalk to mark a star with 45-degree angles on the floor. Balance in the middle on one leg and reach with the other leg as far along each line as possible. Work clockwise and return to the centre after each touch. Measure where your foot marked the chalk and work out the percentage difference between your shortest and longest reaches. 'The closer you can reach in all directions, the better your balance,' says Horsley. Repeat with the other foot to check for muscle imbalances.



YOUR SCORE (percentage difference between shortest and longest reach)

● More than 15% ● 11-15% ● 6-10% ● 0-5%

IMPROVE

DYNAMIC WALKS

'Walking on unstable surfaces improves your balance – you recruit more muscles to stay stable,' says Horsley. Walk barefoot slowly through sand or on another unstable surface. Do 10 x 1-min walks.

STANDING SINGLE-LEG ROTATION

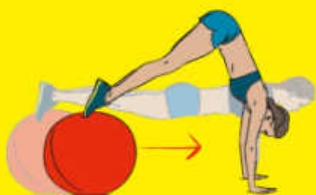
'The single-leg element trains dynamic control of your lower limbs; the rotation develops pelvis stability,' says Horsley.

A Stand on your left leg, arms out in front, and drive your right knee up to your waist.

B As you raise your knee, swing your arms to your right, rotating your chest and shoulders. Lower your knee and arms and repeat. Do 3 x 8 reps on each leg.



TEST



SWISS BALL PIKE

A Adopt a press-up position, feet resting on a Swiss ball.

B Pull your feet towards your chest and lift your hips until they are above your shoulders. Lower back down and repeat as many times as you can.

YOUR SCORE (reps)

● 0-7 ● 8+ ● 12+ ● 18+

IMPROVE



WALKING PIKES

'Doing a pike without a Swiss ball is easier,' says Camara.

A Adopt a plank position, with your weight on your forearms and toes.

B Inch forward on your toes and hinge at the hips until you're in an upside-down V. Reverse the movement. Do 3 x 8 reps.



WALKING SPIDERMAN

This works your obliques.

A From a press-up position, reach forward with your right knee and left hand (right knee lands by right elbow and left hand in front of your head).

B Repeat with the opposite limbs to crawl across the floor. Do 3 x 30 secs.

FROG JUMPS

'The dynamic movement, balance element and forward motion make this a really relevant core exercise for runners,' says Camara.

A With your hands behind your head, squat down. Ensure your knees remain directly above your toes, not ahead of them.

B Jump explosively forwards, keeping your torso upright, landing on your feet, and repeat. Do 3 x 8 reps.

4

UPPER BODY STRENGTH

WHY IT MATTERS 'With a strong upper body you have better control of your arm movements and an upright posture,' says Pyper. 'If you are weak, your shoulders come forward and close your chest, which affects your breathing.'

TEST

SUPINE ROW

This tests your arm, chest and back muscles. Lie under a fixed bar on a squat rack at the gym; with a wide overhand grip, pull your chest to the bar as shown. 'Keep your back and legs straight, your hips high and engage your core,' says Pyper. Count your max reps and do the bent-leg supine row exercise once a week to improve.



YOUR SCORE (reps)

MALE ● 0-14 ● 15+ ● 25+ ● 35+
FEMALE ● 0-9 ● 10+ ● 20+ ● 30+

IMPROVE

BENT-LEG SUPINE ROWS

'Repeating the supine row builds back, chest and arm strength, but using a bent-leg position supports some of your body weight, making the exercise easier,' says Pyper.

A Lie underneath a fixed bar and grab it with a wide overhand grip. Bend your legs so your shins are at a 90-degree angle to the floor.
B Keeping your back straight, pull your chest to the bar, lower and repeat. Do 3 sets of 8-12.



SPEED

6

WHY IT MATTERS If you never race shorter than 5K you might not think a punchy top speed is necessary for you, but having something extra in reserve will seriously benefit your running at any pace and distance, making you stronger, improving

your biomechanics and boosting running economy. 'If you can run faster than your race pace, your muscles will feel more comfortable with a faster leg turnover, and your heart and lungs will learn to sustain higher intensities,' says running and triathlon coach John Brame of RG Active (rgactive.com).

TEST

400M MAXIMAL TEST

'Use a local athletics track, a quiet, obstruction-free segment of one of your local routes or even a treadmill, and go flat out,' says Brame. Record how long it takes you to cover the 400m. 'Just a single speed session a week can make a big difference, so keep testing yourself each month to track progress,' he adds.

YOUR SCORE (seconds)

● 120+ ● 90-119 ● 70-89 ● 69 or less

5

LOWER-LEG STRENGTH

WHY IT MATTERS Strong calf muscles optimise your form. 'The main muscles in your calves are the gastrocnemius [which lifts your heel when your knee is straight] and the soleus [which lifts your heel when your knee is bent]; they should work in perfect combination,' says physio Alison Rose of Coach House Sports Physiotherapy Clinic in Leeds (cspc.co.uk). 'But if they're weak you'll overuse your quads, hip flexors or toe flexors, leading to poor form and injury.'

TEST

STRAIGHT-LEG CALF RAISES

To test gastrocnemius strength, stand with the toes of one foot on a step (hold onto a wall, if needed). With your leg straight, slowly rise up on your toes, then lower down until your heel is below the step. 'If you find you curl your toes you lack calf strength,' says Rose. If your score is low, do more straight-leg calf raises, and the two exercises on p41.



BENT-LEG CALF RAISES

To test soleus strength, stand with the toes of one foot on a step, but bend your knee and ankle to form a line from heel to bum. Slowly raise and lower the heel. 'If you wobble you aren't absorbing shock well on the run, which can cause injury,' says Rose. If your score is low, do bent-leg calf raises and the two exercises on p41.



YOUR SCORE (reps per leg) ● less than 14 ● 15+ ● 20+ ● 25+

IMPROVE

400M REPEATS

'Doing more 400m sprints will boost your speed endurance but also help you understand pace control on longer runs because you learn how your body reacts to different speeds,' says Brame. Do 10 x 400m at the fastest pace you can maintain through *all* the reps in the session. Between each 400m repeat you should rest for the same number of seconds it takes you to run the distance, so your run-to-rest ratio is one-to-one. Try to run at an even pace and focus on form, keeping your chest out, shoulders back and core tight. Good posture and biomechanics instilled here will cross over into your endurance runs.

STAIR SPRINTS

'Stair runs develop dynamic and explosive movements, which translate into more powerful strides and faster speeds on longer runs,' says Brame. Sprint up 20 steps, making sure one foot touches each step. Lift your head so you can still see the next step, but your chest and head stay upright. Do 8 reps.

SPEED LADDER DRILLS

'These encourage rapid foot movements and faster leg turnover,' says Brame. Lay down a speed ladder (Ziland 8m Agility Speed Ladder, £14.99, newitts.com) or mark 50cm intervals with a chalk. Then sprint forward, alternately placing one foot between each rung. Do 3 x 5 reps.

IMPROVE

LATERAL JUMPS

'These build lower leg strength and dynamic stability so you absorb more shock through your knees and hips,' says Rose. **A** Crouch with your left foot on a Bosu ball, and push off from your right leg.

B Land with your left foot on the floor and your right on the Bosu, then repeat on the other side. Do 3 x 30 secs.



HIGH-KNEE DRILLS

'Combining calf raises with high-knee drills builds calf strength while teaching you to drive your leg upwards for better form,' says Rose.

A Stand on your toes and drive your left knee up to waist height.

B When your left leg comes down, drive your right knee up. Complete this running motion over 10m, pumping your arms as you move. Do 3 x 10m drills.



7

> POSTURE

WHY IT MATTERS An upright posture optimises your form and prevents you flopping under fatigue. 'Recreational runners often lean forward and overstride whereas elites maintain an upright posture for better biomechanics,' says Chris Bramah of Worsley Physio Clinic (worsleyphysioclinic.co.uk). 'Your back muscles and anterior core – which includes your obliques, rectus abdominis, iliopsoas and tibialis anterior – control your spine position so you don't lean forwards or to the side, which can cause back injuries or IT-band syndrome.'

TEST

DOUBLE-LEG HIP THRUST

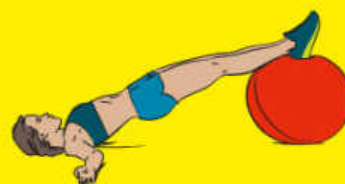
Lie on your back and place your feet on a 20-30cm step. Raise your hips until there's a line between your ankles, hips and shoulders, then lower until your back is flat on the floor. Repeat the move. 'The body shouldn't twist or sway,' says Bramah.



YOUR SCORE (reps)

● less than 19 ● 20+ ● 30+ ● 40+

IMPROVE



SWISS BALL BRIDGE

'This static hold strengthens your lower back for better spinal control when you run,' says Bramah. Lie with your feet on a Swiss ball and extend your arms out to the sides for balance. Now lift your hips until your back is straight and hold this position for as long as possible. Aim for 3 x 30 secs.

S

FOOT SPEED

WHY IT MATTERS 'Quick, efficient foot speed reduces your ground contact time, which increases pace, prevents overloading of the muscles – which can hamper endurance – and minimises overstriding, which can alter momentum,' says running coach Teri Knight (pure-running.co.uk). 'All runners are different, so don't think you have to hit an ideal number, but if your cadence is too low, you will benefit from a boost.'

TEST

CADENCE COUNTER

Warm up for 5-10 minutes, then hit a pace you'd normally sustain on a run of around 5K. When you're up to speed, count the number of ground contacts on one foot for 30 seconds and multiply it by four. 'Do the test in a controlled environment, on a flat, even surface without people or obstacles in the way,' says Knight. 'If your cadence is low, you can improve it by performing the drills here twice a week, but don't try to increase it by more than 10 per cent. The aim is to sharpen up your natural running form, not completely change it.'

YOUR SCORE

● less than 159 ● 160+ ● 170+ ● 180+

IMPROVE



SINGLE-LEG HOPS

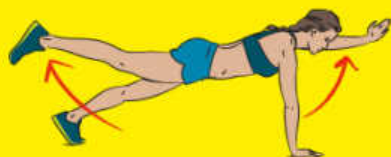
These condition you for shorter contact time with the ground, helping to prep your lower limbs for a faster running cadence.

A Hop forward on one foot. Drive off and land on the front of your foot.

B Hop forward 10m and back 10m, then switch legs. Do 3 sets on each leg.

TOE TAPS

These help to improve your cadence. Stand in front of a 30cm step. Tap the ball of your foot on the step, then quickly change to the other foot as you bring the first foot back down. Repeat for 3 x 1 min.

**PLANK RAISES**

'This strengthens your anterior core to improve posture and stability,' says Bramah.

A From a press-up position lift one hand off the floor and reach your arm out in front, raising the opposite leg behind you as you do. Pause for two seconds.

B Return to the start position and reverse the movement with the opposite limbs; keep your back straight. Repeat 3 x 30 secs.

9

MOBILITY AND FLEXIBILITY

WHY IT MATTERS Tight muscles could be costing you PBs and risking injury. 'With short muscles you experience a reduced range of motion and an increased strain when you run,

which cranks up your injury risk,' says Simon Miles, director of podiatry at Move Clinics (moveclinics.com). 'Tight muscles also reduce your power output because you won't harness the full elastic energy of your tendons, and this can lead to mechanical compensations – such as an arched back or knees caving inwards – which can cause injury.'

TEST**KNEE-TO-WALL TEST**

Measure a spot 10cm away from a wall. Lean against the wall and place your right big toe at the 10cm mark. Keeping your right foot flat on the floor, and bending your left knee beneath your hips, try to get your right knee to touch the wall without lifting your heel. Then move closer to, or further from, the wall to check the maximum distance you can reach with your heel still on the floor. 'This tests your ankle dorsiflexion to help gauge your general running mobility and flexibility,' says Miles.

**YOUR SCORE (cm)**

● less than 5 ● 5-10 ● 11-14 ● 15+

IMPROVE**FLOSS BAND LUNGES**

'These develop mobility around your ankles and knees for better running form and increased power,' says Miles.


A Wrap one end of a floss band (£12.99, mobilitytools.co.uk) around a stable pillar and the other end around your ankle, then lunge forwards.

B Using a pole for balance (a broom/mop handle will do the trick), perform short forward and backward glides with your knee to mobilise your knee and ankle joints. Do 3 x 30 secs per leg.

**ANKLE MOBILITY STRETCH**

'This exercise will lengthen your ankle joint's range of motion, which will help to improve your power when you run,' says Miles.

A Adopt a split stance (one leg forward and one leg back) and place the toes of your front foot against a wall.

B Push your hips forward and slowly lean into the stretch. Try it dynamically (moving slowly into and out of the stretch 10 times) and then as a static hold for 30 seconds. 



Magic Ingredients

Key health and performance-boosting items to add to your shopping list – and tasty ways to get them onto your menu

We'll let you into a secret: not all ingredients that work magic on your running performance and health have to be as virtuous-but-dull as organic mung beans. Some can be sensationally tasty, even a tad indulgent. Here, five running chefs tell us about the ingredients that hit that magical sweet spot for them, delivering both nutritional payoff and taste, along with suggestions for how you can get them into your diet to reap their benefits.

A post-run treat that's 100 per cent guilt-free (well, 90 per cent)

You may have already heard the excellent news that dark chocolate is good for your health as well as your soul. It's made from cocoa beans, which contain antioxidant flavonoids that **fight inflammation** to help speed recovery and **boost heart health**. Cocoa powder and cacao nibs, which also originate from cocoa beans, offer the same nutritional benefits. And Christina Tosi, chef and author of the dessert-centric cookbook *Milk Bar Life: Recipes and Stories* (Clarkson Potter), livens up post-run treats with a variety of cocoa products. 'After a run, I want a snack that gives bursts of energy, protein and antioxidants, and tastes good,' says Tosi, who runs five- to 10-milers as often as she can.

DENSE AND TASTY COCOA COOKIES

'Gluten- and dairy-free, these are delicious after a run or anytime,' says Tosi.

200g unsweetened cocoa powder

145g almond flour

2¼ tsp cornstarch

1½ tsp salt

¾ tsp baking powder

420ml + 2 tbsp coconut cream

120ml pineapple juice

240ml water

475g dark chocolate, broken into chips

1 Heat the oven to 165C. Line a baking tray with baking parchment.

2 Add the cocoa powder, flour, cornstarch, salt and baking powder to a bowl and mix until well combined. While mixing, slowly pour in the coconut cream. Add the pineapple juice and water, continuing to mix until it comes together.

3 Fold in the chocolate chips.

4 Using an 80ml (⅓ cup) measuring cup, portion the dough onto the baking sheet, 7cm-10cm apart. Flatten the dough until the cookies are 10cm in diameter.

5. Bake the cookies for 12-15 minutes, or until the edges are lightly crisp. Let them cool completely on the baking sheet. Store in an airtight container in the fridge or the freezer. Or start eating them...

Choose dark chocolate that at least 70 per cent cocoa and stick to unsweetened cocoa powder and cacao nibs.



Life's a Peach

Peaches contain compounds that help protect against diabetes and heart disease.

Perfect for rehydration and recovery, this is much more than just a juicy fruit

Sweet and refreshing, peaches are ideal after a run. They're water-rich, which will **help you rehydrate**, high in energy-replenishing carbs, the electrolyte potassium and vitamin C, which helps **maintain healthy cartilage**. And they're versatile, as Mark Bittman, runner and author of *How to Cook Everything Fast* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) demonstrates here with his favourite sweet and savoury ways to use the fruit.

GRILLED PEACHES

Grill halved peaches until browned. Top with brown sugar, cinnamon and mascarpone.

GRIDDLED TOAST

Make French toast, then sauté peaches in the pan with honey until soft and browned. Serve on the toast.

SWEET AND SAVOURY SALAD

Combine mixed greens, peaches, watermelon, tomato, avocado, feta and chopped bacon. Drizzle with a lemon dressing.

The high levels of vitamin C in peaches help combat sun damage and keep your skin healthy.

Solar power

Three ways to give top billing to sun-dried tomatoes' star quality

SPICY FRUIT SALAD

Toss sliced peaches with equal parts lime juice and water. Sprinkle with chilli powder, cayenne, sugar, salt and coriander.

PEACH SAUCE

Blend peaches with orange juice. Sweeten with powdered sugar. Use on desserts, chicken or fish.

PORK TACOS

Top pork tacos with peaches, basil, lime juice and ricotta.



BREAKFAST BRUSCHETTA

Drizzle honey on toast. Top with peaches, strawberries and mint.

These sun-kissed beauties are a **concentrated source of nutrients**. They provide vitamins C and K, iron and lycopene, an antioxidant associated with a **lower risk of certain cancers**. 'I like the umami quality that sun-dried tomatoes give any dish,' says RW contributing chef and marathoner Nate Appleman. He uses them in salads, sandwiches, sauces and dressings. Here are three of his favourite ways to get the best from them.

PASTA SAUCE

'This is fast, easy, and very tasty,' says Appleman.

55g sun-dried tomatoes
60ml olive oil
70g almonds, toasted
2 anchovies
1 clove garlic
1 tbsp chopped fresh basil
½ tsp chopped fresh oregano
1 tsp salt

Stick 450g of pasta on to boil. Place the sauce ingredients in a food processor. Process until just blended. Stir in 120ml of the pasta cooking water. Toss the sauce with the pasta while it's hot and top with grated Parmesan. Serves 4

VEGGIE DIP

'The combo of sesame and concentrated tomato flavour is amazing,' says Appleman. This can also be a dressing.

30g sun-dried tomatoes
110g tahini
1 clove garlic
2 tbsp lemon juice

Blend the ingredients in a food processor. Season with salt. To use as a dressing, add water, a little at a time, to thin to desired consistency.

Sun-dried tomatoes contain 20 per cent more lycopene per serving than the fresh variety.

TOMATO BUTTER

'Melt a little of this butter on grilled steak, chicken or salmon,' says Appleman.

120g butter, softened
3 tbsp finely chopped sun-dried tomatoes
1 handful fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
Ground black pepper

In a mixer or by hand, stir all the ingredients together. Refrigerate for an hour before using.

Purple Reign

Harness beetroot's endurance-boosting power in a tasty salad

That purple colour comes from betalains, cancer-fighting antioxidants unique to beetroot that help **reduce blood pressure and inflammation**. Beetroot is also rich in potassium, a key electrolyte that helps your body process carbs and also plays a role in protein synthesis, which is essential for **muscle recovery**. In addition, beetroot is high in antioxidants and contains heart-boosting folic acid. Chris Fischer, a chef, the author of *The Beetlebung Farm Cookbook* (Little, Brown) and a five-time marathoner, uses this magic ingredient in a punchy salad

SWEET-TART SALAD

'The sweet beetroot contrasts with the tart tomatoes,' says Fischer.

450g beetroot, scrubbed
1 tsp salt
1 large green tomato
1 large handful parsley leaves
3 tbsp cold water
3 tbsp vinegar
2 tbsp olive oil
40g radishes, chopped

1 Bring a pot of water to the boil. Add beetroot and salt. Boil for 15-25 mins or until tender. Drain. Set aside.

2 Boil another pot of water. Add the tomato and parsley. Blanch for 30 secs. Remove and briefly cool in iced water.

3 Purée the parsley with the 3 tbsp of cold water.

4 Peel the beetroot and cut in quarters. Place in a bowl and drizzle with vinegar and 1 tbsp of oil. Season with salt.

5 Peel and dice the tomato and place in a bowl with the radishes, remaining oil and purée. Season with salt. Arrange the beetroot on a plate and spoon the tomato-radish mixture on top.
Serves 4

Got a juicer? Beetroot juice is a great source of nitrates, which boost endurance by improving blood and oxygen delivery to your muscles.



A sweet and savoury spin on the small but mighty olive

Olives are rich in both monounsaturated fats that help **protect your heart**, and antioxidants that **reduce inflammation**. They pack a flavour punch to match their health kick, too. 'Olives may be small, but their briny, piquant flavour brings ordinary ingredients to life,' says Pam Anderson, 10-time marathoner, RW contributing chef and author of *Three Many Cooks* (Ballantine Books). She incorporates olives into Mediterranean-inspired pizzas and salads.

Research has shown that the monounsaturated fat found in olives can help to reduce blood pressure.

SAVOURY SALAD

Large, bright green Castelvetro olives add fruity flavour.


450g thin green beans, blanched
6 Castelvetro olives (£2.59 for 120g, waitrose.com), sliced
1½ sticks celery, diced + **1** handful celery leaves
1 medium shallot, thinly sliced
½ lemon (zest and juice only)
2 tbs olive oil
 Salt and ground black pepper

In a bowl, toss the beans, olives, celery, leaves, zest and shallots. Drizzle with the lemon juice and oil. Season with salt and pepper. Serves 6

SWEET TAPENADE

Serve on a toasted baguette spread with goat's cheese.

1 clove garlic
150g dried figs
130g black olives
1 tsp herbs de Provence
1 tsp minced fresh rosemary
1 tsp orange zest
2 tsp balsamic vinegar
2 tbs olive oil
 Ground black pepper

In a food processor, mince the garlic. Add the figs, olives, herbs, zest and a sprinkle of pepper. Process until finely chopped. Add vinegar and oil; pulse to combine. 

Pit and Run

Long-associated with cancer prevention, the phytonutrient hydroxytyrosol found in olives has now been shown to help guard against bone loss.





HEROES OF RUNNING

RW PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE PIONEERS, THE GAME-CHANGERS, THE VISIONARIES... THE HEROES WHO HAVE GIVEN MOST TO OUR SPORT IN 2015

REDEEMER



USAIN BOLT - 29

'IF I WANTED TO CONTINUE
MY LEGEND, I HAD TO WIN'

The record books may list 9.58 as Usain Bolt's best 100m, but the 9.79 seconds it took him to retain his crown at the World Championships in August was surely his finest hour. Against the odds, and under immense pressure in a race cast as a battle for the soul of the sport, Bolt crossed the line as more than arguably the most supremely talented athlete of our time – he did so as a hero.

Like another icon, Muhammad Ali, Bolt transcends sport with his gifts and charisma. And there was a clear parallel between Bolt's duel with the American Justin Gatlin in Beijing and Ali's Rumble in the Jungle against George Foreman in 1974. As with Ali when he travelled to Zaire, expectation was stacked heavily against Bolt on his return to the Bird's Nest Stadium:

persistent injury had left him struggling for form and he didn't manage a decent 100m time until July. It wasn't looking good. Written off by most, and

stumbling in his semi-final, he seemed for the first time to be fallible, even fragile. Gatlin, by contrast, arrived on the back of two years of metronomic global dominance, 28 races undefeated and a 9.77 semi-final.

As with Ali and Foreman, there was plenty of personal animosity and there was far more resting on Bolt's shoulders than his sporting legacy: the 100m final had taken on a good versus evil narrative, with Gatlin as the villain. Athletics was reeling from drugs scandals, so it would be a dark day indeed if a man twice banned for doping won the World Championships showpiece event.

Bolt hadn't been hiding from running's big issue. Speaking to *RW* in the lead-up to the champs, he was outspoken about the prospect of lining up next to Gatlin and fellow convicted doper Tyson Gay.

'Every time we take a step forward, we take several steps back,' he said. 'The message should be: If you cheat you're going to be kicked out of the sport.'

With Bolt the world always expects, but this time all but the most romantic expected the worst. Emerging onto the track he ran through his repertoire, he smoothed his hair, he raised his eyebrows, he even played peekaboo on the start line, but there was no masking the uncertainty in his eyes.

He burst from the blocks, reacting to the gun six-thousandths of a second faster than Gatlin. There was no sideward glance, no chest beating, just belief and courage coursing through every straining sinew until he crossed the line one-hundredth of a second ahead. It was pure theatre.

'This was definitely my hardest race,' he said afterwards. 'If I wanted to continue my legend, I had to win.' Eight-time world champion Michael Johnson summed it up when he said: 'Usain Bolt was challenged more than he has been at any time during his career. Put on top of that the burden of "saving the sport", which was placed on his shoulders... This is Usain Bolt's best race ever.'

Relegated to a footnote of this grand narrative was the fact this was his third 100m gold in four World Champs. And there was more to come. A fourth 200m title came when he accelerated around the bend to put enough of a gap between himself and Gatlin that he could coast the final 50m, grinning and thumping his chest. Here, once again, was the Bolt we know.

In the 4x100m it looked as if the US was about to spoil the party, as Gay, with a seemingly significant lead, passed the baton to Mike Rogers. But Bolt was not to be denied, storming the anchor leg to ensure there was no hint of tarnish on this victory for clean sport. He may not have single-handedly saved athletics – that feat is beyond even him – but he restored our faith in the notion that it can be done.



JACK DANIELS - 82

HIS PHILOSOPHY? MINIMUM
WORK, MAXIMUM PAYOFF

> **A**t 81, the renowned coach and exercise physiologist has had such a profound influence on training that he could be our sport's Albert Einstein. His 1998 book, *Daniels' Running Formula*, outlined his simple philosophy: do the minimum amount of work for the maximum payoff.

Between winning two Olympic medals with the US pentathlon team, Daniels studied sports coaching in Sweden, returning to the US to write his PhD thesis on exercise and altitude. So, when it was announced that Mexico City would host the 1968 Olympics, the first summer Games to be held at altitude, he was the man American Olympic runners turned to. 'Jack was the only one who knew anything about the physiology of altitude exercise,' says American miler Jim Ryun, who won silver in the 1500m at those Games.

Daniels was running a Nike research lab years later when US marathoner Joan Benoit arrived. She was recovering from knee surgery and panicking about the fast-approaching 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Daniels told her to lie down on the treadmill. He then suspended an exercise bike, upside down, from the ceiling, and told her to pedal it with her arms. 'It didn't do her legs any good,' he says. 'It was mainly for her head.' Benoit won the first women's Olympic Marathon at the Games.

In the 1980s Daniels began a 17-year stretch coaching at the State University of New York, and working with college kids has brought him great satisfaction. 'Runners with less talent have more room for improvement,' he says, 'How much fun is that?'

With his penchant for numbers, you might think Daniels is a hard taskmaster. But no. 'My runners are always telling me they can run faster than the paces I give them,' he says. 'I say, "I know that, but we're not trying to run fast workouts. We're trying to run smart workouts that lead to fast races." Wise words indeed from running's Einstein.'



LIFETIME ACHIEVER

RISING STAR

After a rather frustrating 2014, this year was a real breakthrough for the 22-year-old from the small Scottish town of Milnathort. At the World Championships she made the 1500m final and finished an excellent fifth in a very strong field, which included world record holder Genzebe Dibaba. Muir also clocked a 1500m PB of 3:58.66, in Monaco, to go second on the British all-time list behind the great Kelly Holmes, and took top spot on the podium at the Oslo Diamond League, winning the 1500m in fine style.

What's so exciting about Muir's 2015 performances is they showed both her talent and the signs that she's coming of age as a competition athlete. And all just at the right time, with Rio looming large. 'I knew I was capable of running faster times from how my training was going,' she says, 'but I was unsure how I would perform at the major championships, as improvement on the world stage can only really come with time.'

At the World Championships she showed that she's clearly now comfortable among the world's best. 'I think you just have to take it in your stride,' says Muir. 'In previous years I would have felt intimidated, but I feel much more at home racing at the top level now and I think just having that belief in myself has influenced my performances a lot this year.'

Muir is the kind of gutsy, heart-on-sleeve performer we can all relate to, and she's driven by an enormous will to win. 'Running sub-four minutes for the first time was a huge barrier to break,' she says, 'but nothing beats winning a

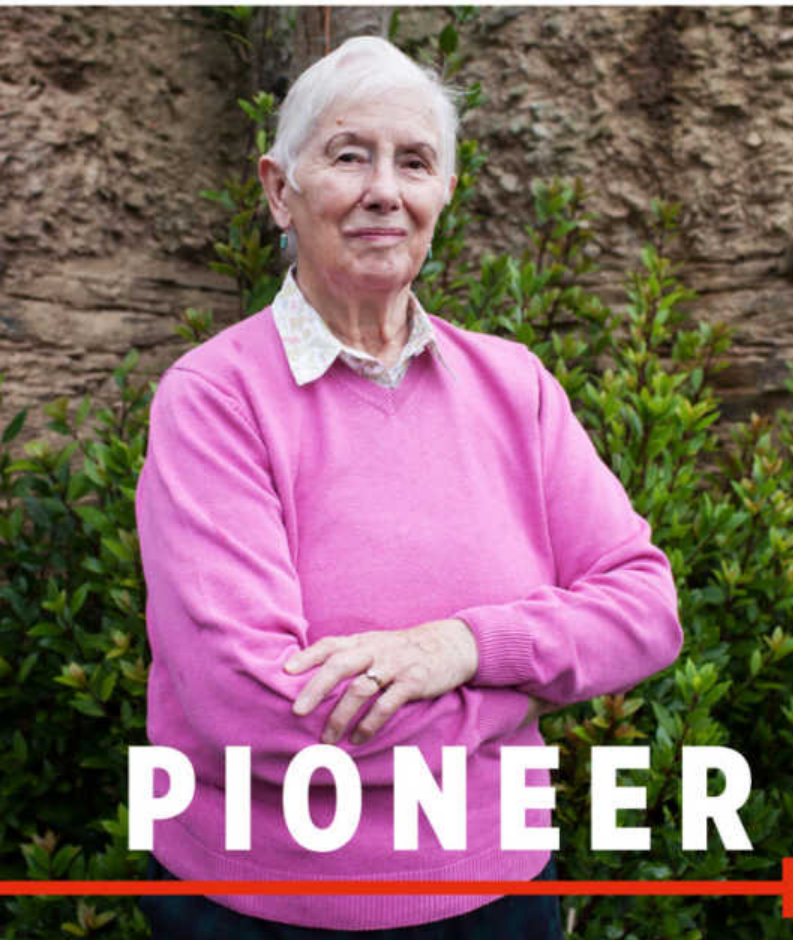
race, so I think Oslo has the edge this year. To win in the manner I did felt amazing!'

So what can we expect in 2016? 'Training has gone as well I could have hoped since the World Championships and I'm on track to be in great shape for next year,' she says. 'It's difficult to say where my expectations are, as I keep making such big progressions, but I would definitely be aiming for that final in Rio and, once there, anything can happen...' Watch this space.

LAURA MUIR - 22

'I FEEL MUCH MORE AT HOME
RACING AT THE TOP LEVEL NOW'





PIONEER

ANGELA COPSON - 68

'COMPETING IS A GREAT WAY TO SOCIALISE'

There's something magical about the story of Angela Copson.

The rewriting of the masters record books by the 68-year-old from Northamptonshire would be remarkable enough in itself, but it's made all the more so by the fact that she only started running at the age of 59, when she trained for and ran the London Marathon. She finished in 3:57, two days after her 60th birthday.

Copson joined local club Rugby and Northampton AC 'mainly for a social night out once or twice a week', she says, and to run in vets track events 'just to make up the numbers'. But by the time we featured her in RW, in August 2013, she had set national, European and three world records in the W65 category.

Later that year she became the fastest woman in the world for her age over 26.2, with

an astonishing 3:17 in Berlin, and all with a smile that reflects that her true motivation has never been breaking records, but the pleasure of running, and the camaraderie that surrounds it. 'I'm always asked what motivates me and the answer is that competing is a great way to socialise and I can't think of any better way to stay healthy.'

In May, Copson set a W65 10K world record of 40:30 at the Great Manchester Run. Then she travelled to Lyon for the World Masters Athletics Championships, winning the W65 1500m, 5000m, 10,000m and 8km cross-country event. In July, aged 68, she became the oldest female sub-6-miler ever, and set a masters mile WR of 5:54.49.

She is truly an inspiration – not merely because she breaks records, but for the joy she clearly takes in the gift of every stride.

DIANE CHARLES - 82

THE WOMAN WHO BROKE THE MILE RECORD FIVE TIMES

The story of how women fought their way into the marathon is often told, but less is known about the

track and cross-country trailblazers who came before them. One such runner is Diane Leather (now Charles), the first woman to run a sub-five mile.

Charles grew up playing lacrosse until, aged 19, the 1952 Helsinki Olympics caught her imagination. She joined Birchfield Harriers in Birmingham, where coach Dorette Nelson-Neal recognised her talent and steered her to longer events (for women, 'long' then meant cross-country, the 880 yards, and occasionally, the mile). A year later, she ran a WR 5:02.6 mile.

The lead-up to her first sub-five mile was dramatic: in 1953, Romanian Edith Treybal ran 5:00.3. On May 26, 1954, Charles also fell short, with 5:00.2. Three days later, in Birmingham, she lined up again. Her splits were uneven, yet with a

final surge she dipped under five minutes, finishing in 4:59.6.

There was no great fanfare. Not until 1960 could women race further than 200m in the Olympics, and it wasn't until 1967 that the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) recognised women's WRs in the mile and 1500m. (Charles's time is considered valid). By contrast, when Roger Bannister broke four minutes just 23 days earlier, he became an instant legend. Charles broke the mile record four more times, culminating in a 4:45 in 1955.

After retiring at 27, Charles went on to teach, do social work and raise four children. Now 82, she lives with her husband of 55 years in Cornwall, and remains modest about her role in women's running. 'I had no idea I would ever be called a pioneer,' says the trailblazer, whose advice to athletes today is simple: 'Train hard, and give it all you've got.'



Photography Puma, John Miller, Herald and Times Group, Gareth Phillips, Alex Rotas, Jonathan Torgovnik

HENRY WANYOIKE - 42

HE LOST HIS SIGHT
AND BECAME A LEADER

Like many Kenyans, Henry Wanyoike hoped to represent his country as a runner. He ran to school and could blitz a 13:50 5K. But after suffering a mild stroke in 1995, aged just 21, he awoke blind one morning. 'It was quite tough, going to bed with good sight and the next day, not being able to see,' he says.

Wanyoike became depressed, doing little over the next three years. Eventually he attended the Machakos Technical Institute for the Blind and learned braille. Encouraged to run, he initially refused, but with the guidance of sighted runners, he started jogging. He fell a lot, but 'I saw something inside me hadn't died.'

A year later, he practically pulled his guide through the final 200m to win the 5000m at the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games. His 15:46.29 was just three seconds off the WR for a blind athlete (specifically, a T11 athlete, with near-total to total blindness).

Beating the record would require a more consistent training partner, so Wanyoike turned to friend Joseph Kibunja (second left). Only 18 months later they broke the 5000m and 10,000m WRs, running 15:17.75 and 32:34.31 at the 2002 World Champs. A year later they ran the London Marathon in a T11 WR of 2:32:51. A week after that they clocked 2:31:31 at the Hamburg Marathon.

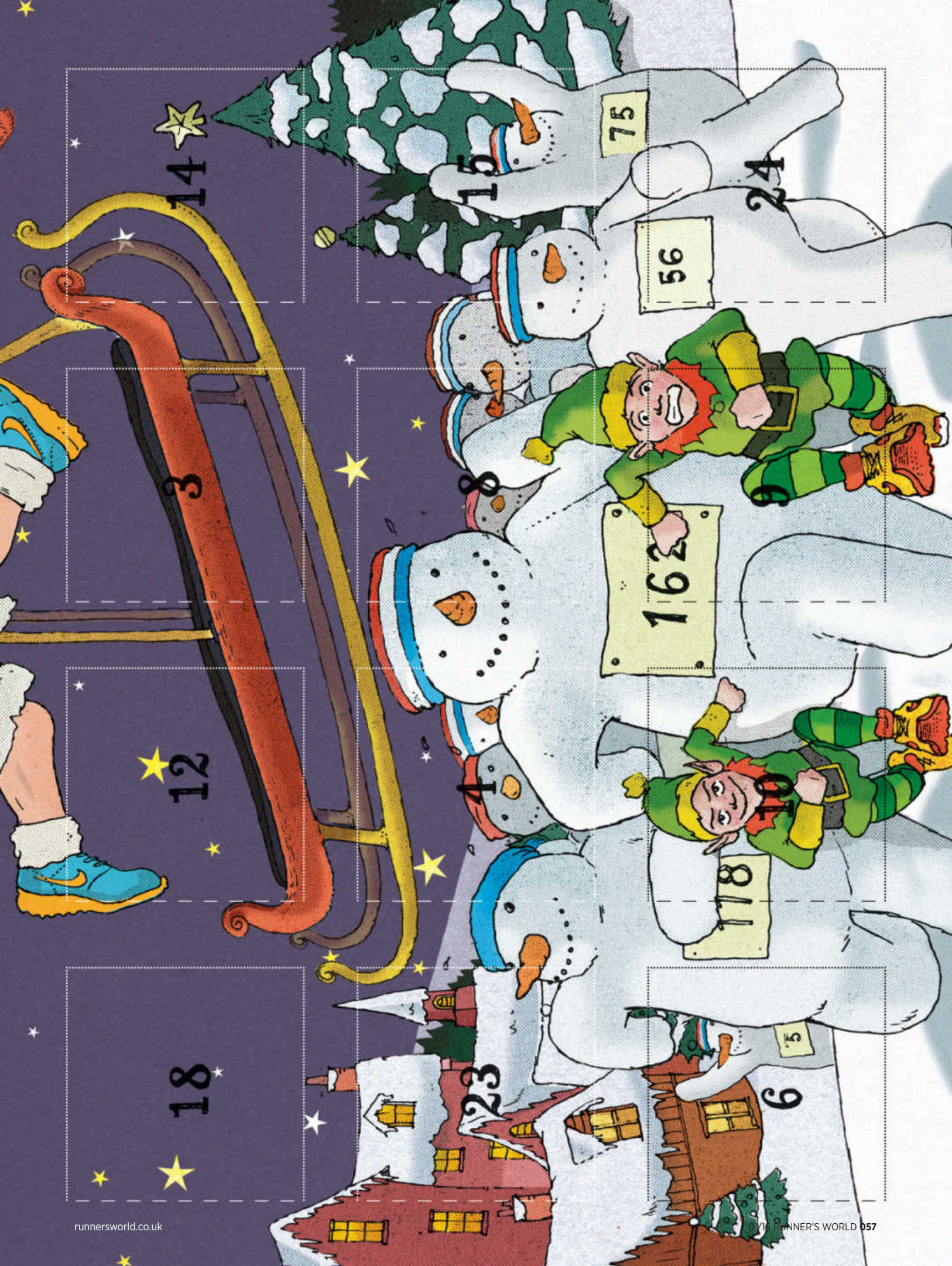
Wanyoike launched the Henry Wanyoike Foundation, which has donated canes, wheelchairs and sewing machines to various programmes; and hosts the Hope for the Future Run. His calls for inclusion even helped bring a modification to the Kenyan constitution in 2010, requiring all the nation's counties to include a representative from a marginalised people, including the disabled.

Wanyoike and Kibunja are now looking to run a sub-2:30 marathon in Rio at the 2016 Paralympic Games. Heat could be a factor, and they'll be 42 and 41, respectively, but Wanyoike is undeterred. Vision, he likes to point out, is more powerful than sight. **EW**

VISIONARY

RUNNER'S THE Advent Calendar







There's no need to wait for Santa to squeeze down the chimney to get what you want for Christmas. Behind each door of RW's advent calendar you'll find a 'treat' to improve fitness, speed recovery or boost performance. No festively shaped milk chocolate, just 12 simple ways to open the door to better running in 2016.

TODAY'S TREAT
A better caffeine hit

Matcha tea contains more performance-boosting caffeine than espresso, but delivers a jitter-free energy lift. Made from whole green tea leaves, it also retains chlorophyll and antioxidants – research shows two cups a day speeds metabolism and combats heart disease and cancer.

TODAY'S TREAT
A better night's sleep

There are better ways of ensuring quality kip than downing mince pies and mulled wine. Research in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* found the scent of lavender oil improves sleep quality. Miaroma Lavender Pure Essential Oil (£11.39 for 30ml, hollandandbarrett.com).

TODAY'S TREAT
A VO₂-max boost

The amount of oxygen you supply to working muscles (VO₂max) is a fitness gold standard. Boost yours by putting the kettle on: a study in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* found performing high-intensity kettle bell snatches for four weeks raised VO₂-max by six per cent.

TODAY'S TREAT
Pasta with protein source

Sneak more muscle-repairing protein into your post-run meal with Organic Edamame Bean Spaghetti (£3.29 for 200g, ocado.com). It looks and cooks like standard pasta, but contains a whopping 245g of protein per 56g serving. Plus it's higher in fibre and gluten-free, too.

TODAY'S TREAT Skip the ice bath

December trot followed by a dunk in freezing water? Maybe not: two studies published in the *Journal of Physiology* found post-exercise cold-water immersion may reduce fitness gains. Muscle biopsies revealed strength and mass were greater in those who employed active recovery.

TODAY'S TREAT The seeds of recovery

Supp up to lessen any negative effects of your efforts. A study published in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics* found runners who took nine grams of chia seed supplement per day for seven days suffered less local inflammation.

TODAY'S TREAT A cool performance boost

One for treadmill days when the gym is toasty: a study in the *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports* found rinsing with menthol mouth rinse in hot conditions changed runners' perception of the heat and significantly improved their performance.

TODAY'S TREAT Pollution protection

A highly palatable pill for urban runners: get liberal with the olive oil. Research in *Environmental Health Perspectives* found three extra grams a day for four weeks reduced the negative health consequences of breathing polluted air. Tastier than a mouthful of diesel fumes, too.

TODAY'S TREAT Age-proof muscle

We lose muscle as we age, but we can slow the decline. Research in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found six months of daily fish oil consumption – equivalent to 200–400g daily of fish such as salmon – increased muscle volume by three per cent and strength by six per cent.

TODAY'S TREAT More from cross-training

With New Year looming, it's a great time to sign up for a cross-training class: research in the *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness* found eight weeks of mat Pilates improved balance, hamstring flexibility, abdominal muscle endurance and abdominal muscle activity.

TODAY'S TREAT Pain-free knees

If you're plagued by knee pain, taping can ease it – even if you don't know how. A study in the *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports* found applying sports tape correctly or incorrectly significantly decreased patellar tendon pain after running.

TODAY'S TREAT Stronger bones

While a *British Medical Journal* review of studies recently questioned the bone-boosting benefits of calcium supplements, a study in *Fitness Journal* reaffirmed that resistance training (twice weekly for 12 months) boosted bone mineral density in active middle-aged participants.





An inmate runs a lap of the yard in Oregon State Penitentiary in the northwestern United States. Eight times a year the yard becomes a 5K, 10K and half-marathon course on which inmates race against members of the public.

**THERE IS A RUNNING
CLUB IN OREGON STATE
PENITENTIARY. FOR ITS
MEMBERS, THE WALL IS
NOT JUST A METAPHOR.
RW'S MICHAEL HEALD
GOES INSIDE THE US
PRISON TO SEE THE
REDEMPITIVE POWER
OF RUNNING UP CLOSE**

WALL

THE



When the first inmates arrived at the Oregon State Penitentiary (OSP) back in 1866, it did not have a wall. Prisoners were instead fitted with an iron ankle shackle, and anyone who tried to run in the 'Oregon Boot' wasn't going anywhere fast. (A four-metre wall was soon built.) By 2014, when I started going to the prison to run races, the boot had been out of use for 75 years, and inmates could buy running shoes at the prison shop. Running has become one of the most sought-after privileges for the men inside. The wall, incidentally, is now eight metres high.

'I don't know about those shorts,' the guard says to me. 'They're supposed to go to the knee.' So while the other outsiders slip off their shoes and pad toward the metal detector I tug at my waistband until it's riding precariously low. Most of the people waiting for us inside have been convicted of violent crimes, so the dress code is, it seems, for our own protection. The message is, show too much skin and there's no telling what could happen. I pull my shorts down further and the guard nods.

Otherwise, the rituals are the same as on my previous visit: the 'you may be taken hostage' speech, the stamp of invisible ink, the gates opening and closing, and before I know it we've passed the cell blocks and are outside, heading for the exercise yard.

Despite an expanse of grass and a surprising number of flowers, there's an overwhelming sense of grey. My eyes hit concrete in every direction. Out on the asphalt track the runners are warming up in sweatshirts and jeans. The sun hasn't quite cleared the top of the wall and we're shivering in its long shadows, even with our mandatory extra layer – an orange vest, to help the guards pick us out from the blue-clad inmates.

As soon as the gate closes behind us, a small group of inmates approaches, bringing safety pins for our race numbers. I introduce Gary, who I've brought along for the first time today. Gary is nearly 50, but he has a 2:29 marathon to his name; he is going to run circles around everyone today except Jeff, the fastest inmate. (At the request of many inmates, we've used



only their first names and, in some cases, pseudonyms. Out of consideration for their victims, we haven't included details of person-on-person crimes.)

One of the guys pulls me aside. 'I'm glad you came back,' he says, then confides that he woke up in tears before realising it was race day. We're the only visitors he gets. We shake hands but, to be honest, I feel a little weird about it. A few nights ago I looked up his record. I stopped myself before I got very far, but I wonder if he thinks I now know what he's in for.

I'm actually looking for Scott, the inmate I'm hoping to keep pace with today. All around me, people are discussing pace groups, how hot it's going to get, whether

too much was eaten at breakfast, or not enough. It doesn't sound any different to the anxious pre-race chatter you'd hear at any event. My first time inside, I didn't even notice the armed guards up on the wall until it was time to leave.

'Twenty minutes!' calls the inmate doing the announcing. 'Twenty minutes 'till the second annual High Wall Half Marathon!'

THE 'PRE-HAB CLUB

As every runner knows, our sport has a way of shaping your identity. The self-discipline involved in getting out there can be applied to pretty much everything you do. For many of the inmates, particularly those who have been derailed by addiction,



01. The Oregon Boot, used to restrain prisoners in the Oregon State Penitentiary. It weighed up to two stone (12.7kg)

02. The original wall. Even after it was built inmates were forced to wear the 'boot'. The practice ended, for the most part, in 1878

03. A view of the OSP yard as it is today. The maximum security prison, which has a capacity of 2,242, contains the state's death row

running offers a fundamentally different blueprint for how to live.

Located an hour south of Portland in the city of Salem, in the northwest of the US, the OSP is male-only, but women and men from the outside are welcome to compete against inmates in the monthly race series, which runs from March to October – seven 5Ks and 10Ks (run concurrently) and one half marathon. Out of 2,000 inmates, just 130 are part of the running club. Over four decades old, organised and funded by inmates, the programme's very existence suggests the possibility of rehabilitation. Eighteen months of good behaviour are required before an inmate can join, and it can be years before space opens up

to those on the waiting list. In addition to the race series, club members are eligible for 'running turnout,' which allows daily access to the yard to train. This is a vastly preferable alternative to 'main yardlines,' when non-running inmates clog up the track.

It makes all the difference, inmates Todd and James told me on a previous visit, to be able to set goals, to have races to train for. They are, as James put it, part of the 'one bad day' club, the implication being that they had been leading respectable lives until one bad day they just snapped. I imagined bar fights that turned ugly,

drink driving, drug-induced stupidity. 'When I run,' said James, 'I don't see the walls.'

There's a tremendous

amount of realisation that life has to go on. It can get pretty rough and dark in here. But we're not just going to be here.'

The story of how the OSP went from the Oregon Boot to prison-sanctioned half marathons really begins with legendary US distance runner and Oregon native Steve Prefontaine. When 'Pre' died in car accident in 1975, some of those who were devastated by the news were inmates at the OSP. But they weren't just Pre fans; he had been secretly coaching them for years.

> 'I'm going for a run by myself today,' he'd tell teammates, then drive an hour north to Salem. He cultivated an outlaw persona on the track, but kept his relationship with actual outlaws under wraps.

Imagine if Johnny Cash hadn't just performed in Folsom Prison, but also taught songwriting workshops there, keeping it secret until passing away in a tragic accident, and you'll begin to understand the profound connection between the OSP running club and Pre. 'It was the gospel to him, that running could save you,' says Mary Marckx Creel, Prefontaine's former girlfriend. 'By spreading it to prisoners he was showing that they could be redeemed.'

'It wasn't just Pre,' says Ben Andrews, another former Oregon University athlete. 'You know who also went in? Dellinger.' After winning the 5000m bronze at the Tokyo Olympics, Bill Dellinger became a top coach, training the likes of Prefontaine and Alberto Salazar. And for several decades after Prefontaine's death, Dellinger quietly fanned the flames under his OSP legacy, bringing runners to conduct clinics and run races.

DRAWN TO RUN

'Runners! Fifteen minutes!' the announcer calls. I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that there are only four outsiders running today. How many people would want to take a Friday off work to run in a prison? But Todd, the Running Program Coordinator, tells me that's four more than last year, along with about twice as many inmates.

A crowd has gathered at a sign showing lap splits for finishing times from 1:30 up to two hours. Mickey, a youthful, shirtless 51-year-old, asks Gary and I what we're aiming for. When Gary confesses it's somewhere in the 1:20s, Mickey whistles: 'You'll be right there with Jeff.'

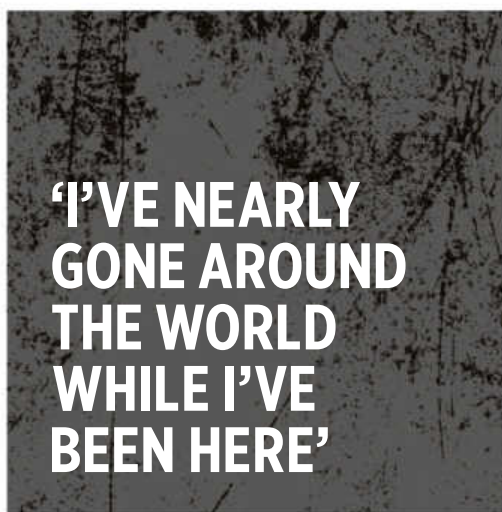
As usual, Jeff is on his own, stretching. He pulls out his earbuds as we approach. Like Mickey, he's already shirtless. The fastest inmate in the prison is bigger than I remember. He must be six-five, six-six. 'I don't know why exactly,' he says, 'but I'm feeling better.' He tests his Achilles tendon to reaffirm this. 'Last week I ran 1:26 in practice.'

I go looking for my own rival in the 'recreation building' in the middle of the yard. It's the least charming 'barn,' as inmates call it, I've ever been inside. I notice a guy pinning a photo of his family to his shorts. I collect my bib and give my name to the guys in charge of the results. Below every race number is the running club's motto: 'Run for Your Life.'

Finally I spot Scott, alone at a table along the far wall, poring over a printout of his mile splits from last year. He looks extraordinarily focused. 'Michael,' he says. 'You ready for this?' Outside, the announcer gives the 10-minute warning. Scott pulls off his sweatshirt.

I had not felt nervous with other inmates, but Scott has a particular kind of easiness about him. On my first time inside a lot of personal stuff just seemed to naturally come up: his six kids, the wife who visits daily, the 6,000 miles he's run, the 8,000 on the elliptical, the 7,000 on the exercise bike. 'If you add it all up,' he said about the distance, 'I've nearly gone around the world while I've been in here.'

It's difficult, trying to get to know someone who doesn't have a phone number or email address. After my first race, I considered writing a letter to Scott but was reluctant to give him my address,



opening myself up to who knows how many years of correspondence. Then there's the whole question of why he's here, and whether or not the answer will change everything I think about him.

So why even ask the question? Either you believe people – even those guilty of terrible violence – can be rehabilitated, or you don't. Regardless, it's worth considering the case of Kelley Slayton.

Locked up at 24, Kelley didn't get sober until six years into his 14-year sentence. 'My dad was a big influence,' he says. 'He won the masters division of the Portland Marathon when I was 19. At the time, I would run races with him after getting loaded the night before, but I didn't see myself as a runner. Once I was inside, I eventually realised running was a way of bringing us closer.' He believes there is a clear link between his running and his

sobriety. 'With those races in there,' he says, 'I hated losing. I could tell right away that drinking wasn't doing me any good in life. My last drink was out of a mop bucket.'

Kelley now lives with a joy that comes from beating the odds. Known as 'Rock' on the inside, the former prison middleweight boxing champion would look seriously intimidating if not for his constant smile. It's difficult to believe this is the same man who, at his sentencing, was called a 'monster' by the judge.

Now 47, Kelley was released in 2006, having completed his first marathon in the OSP. Since then, he's clocked a 2:50 PB. More importantly, he's also managed to find a meaningful career. After struggling for years to find work, he landed his 'dream job' as a counsellor at a rehab centre. 'Every day I get to help people,' he told me, incredulous at his good fortune.

Kelley is also the only former inmate who goes back into the prison to race. 'Every time I go, I'm showing people you can come out of here and make it in life,' he said. 'I'm lucky. About eight out of 10 people go back to prison. They talk about becoming institutionalised – I fight that notion.'

INSIDE TRACK

'Runners, on your marks...'

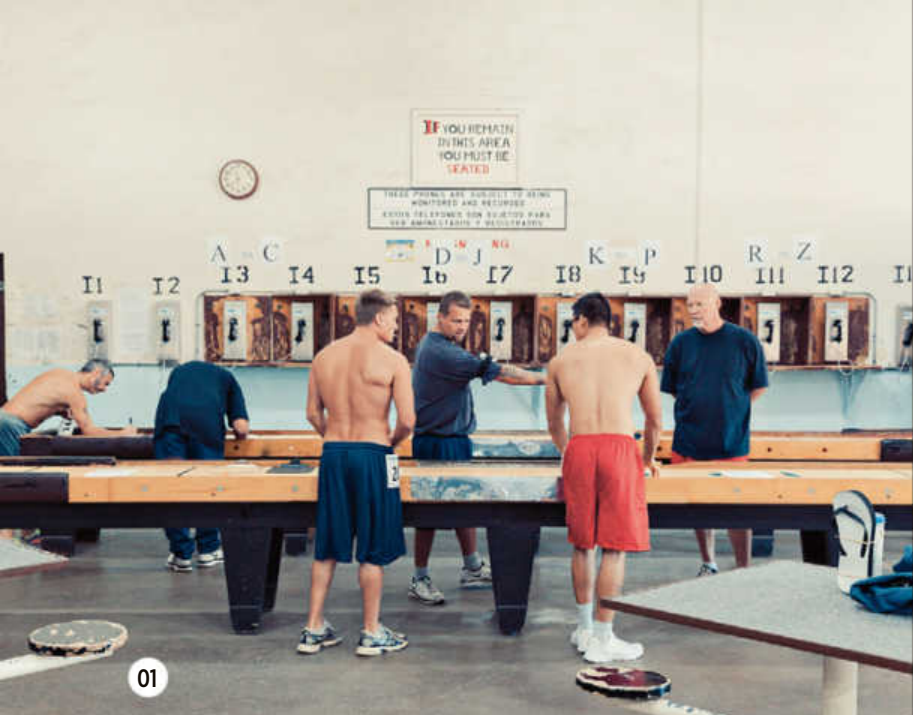
As 37 of us toe the line, the rest of the OSP running club is either manning the water station, serving as lap counters, or simply ready to cheer us round the 31 loops of the yard that will add up to our half marathon. 'Get set,' says the announcer. There is, of course, no gun.

Jeff and Gary zip off. I settle into a pack with Scott and Mickey. Even with music playing over the PA system, it feels pretty empty out on the track. The guards, as

you'd imagine, do not clap or cheer or ring cow bells or hold up signs bearing witty words of encouragement. But every time we round the back corner of the 'barn' and reach the shade under the wall, the announcer is once again audible and there's a tangible lift in energy. 'Six down for Gary Geist!' he says. Which means Gary already has a half lap on us. And Jeff has even more than that. Before long they'll come speeding past us.

Among the mass of blue at the finish line is one man wearing a red shirt. Scott tells me he's the only prison employee to cheer on the runners. I'm not surprised to learn that he's also a marathoner. The most dedicated spectator, however, is an older inmate, standing alone, who claps heartily every time we pass.

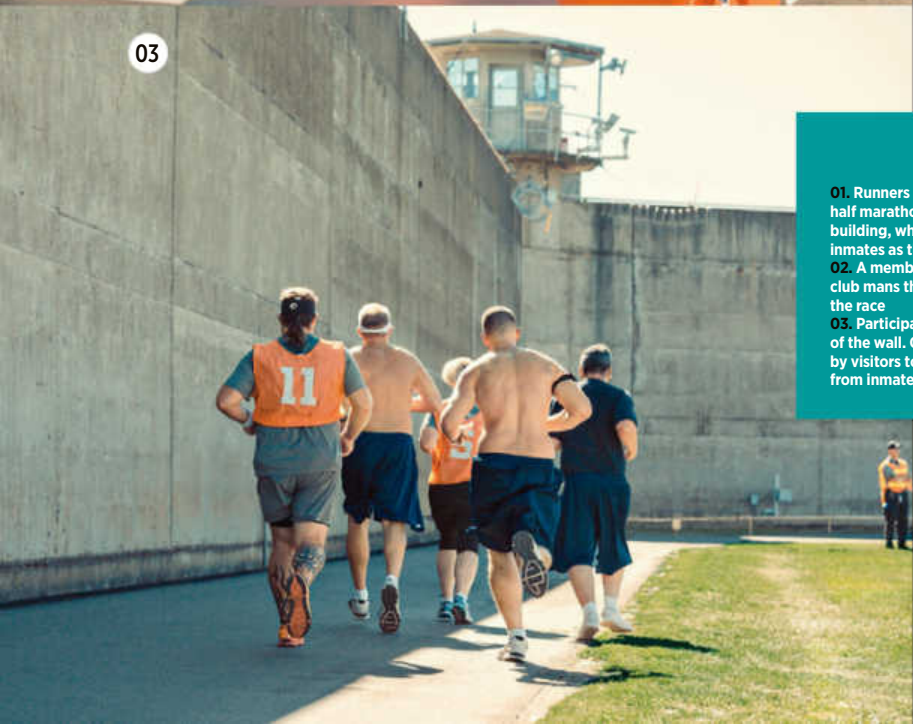
The race pace is just the right side of conversational, so a couple times per lap



01



02



03

01. Runners register for the half marathon in the recreation building, which is known to inmates as the 'barn'
02. A member of the OSP's running club mans the water station during the race
03. Participants race in the shadow of the wall. Orange vests are worn by visitors to distinguish them from inmates, who wear blue

I'm able to summon the breath to chat. Scott tells me how pleased he is to see other inmates in the mix. 'So many people have improved,' he says. I ask him why he joined the running club. 'I was facing 25 years and I knew there was going to be limited access to healthcare in here. I wanted to take care of my heart. And, emotionally, I just wanted to run.'

After a stroke forced Bill Dellinger to stop coaching at the OSP in 2000, a man named Dick Brown took over his role at the penitentiary. Brown had already guided numerous runners to the Olympics and World Championships, and had been at the forefront of recovery research for decades, his findings influencing many other coaches, including Alberto Salazar.

Brown coached at the OSP for a decade until being diagnosed with cancer in 2010. And when I visited him at his home in Eugene, Oregon, he was full of fascinating insights about the running club and its members. 'I felt totally safe,' he told me. 'I felt appreciated. I do remember the guards telling us, "If anything happens, just lay on the ground," but it was always a safe, friendly atmosphere.'

'There was a saying in the prison,' he said. 'There's the sad, the mad and the bad. There's about 70 per cent sad – they're decent people who got hooked up with drugs or alcohol or made a dumb choice. There's 15 per cent who are mad – just mentally ill. And there is the 15 per cent who are just bad to the bone.'

'The runners feel that it's a privilege to be in the club,' he went on. 'What I always come back to is this: I never saw anybody make fun of any runner there. Even when you had somebody that was overweight, or not very athletic – even if they just walked most of it, but finished – the guys encouraged them. There's a sense of pride. Not just in themselves, but in one another.'

DEEP BONDS

It was Dick Brown who brought Ben Andrews, a four-minute miler he was coaching on the outside, to the prison for the first time in 2000. 'I don't remember being nervous,' says Andrews. 'More just curious. What had happened to these people? I'll never forget the first time I saw Kelley out in the yard. He was so amped.'

'The first time I ran with them. I was like, "I'm not going to be the asshole who comes in here and kicks their asses". Then someone five metres back yelled, "Hey, Pretty Boy! You better run! You didn't come here to talk!"

They called me Pretty Boy because I shaved my legs. Just chirping, "Pretty Boy, Pretty Boy!" and I'm thinking, I'm dead! What do I do? So I went back into the pack and introduced myself, and the guy



01

01. Jeff, by some way the fastest runner in the OSP
 02. An inmate (right) enjoys his last race before being released
 03. The payphones in the yard do not work during races
 04. Running helped Kelly Slayton change his life



02



03



04

was like, "I wanna tell you something: if you don't run hard, you won't be welcome back. They might let you in, but you won't be welcome."

'After I won, I saw the real race was for second, between Rock and a guy called Johnny Ace. And Rock's leading, leading, leading, then Johnny just out-kicks him. Rock is tatted up, he looks like a bad dude. And he was crying. He wasn't hiding. It was just raw emotion. He was just stripped. So I went over to tell him, "Hey man, good race. What's the matter?"'

'He said, "I hate losing!"'

'And I said, "I can help you to never lose a race again."

'And he just looked up, and it was like his tears went right back into his eyes. And he said, "What can you teach me, man?"'

And with that, Andrews was the next elite runner to coach prisoners at the OSP.

Over the years Andrews' relationship with Kelley developed beyond simply coaching. 'I went through some tough times and he was one of the friendly voices in my life, telling me, "It's going to be all right"', says Andrews. 'We're from the same part of town. It could have all gone differently for him had he not been using. It changed my life forever, meeting Kelley. To think that I could have an impact on someone...'

Even as Kelley's release date neared, Andrews felt no anxiety. 'This was my friend about to enter a new chapter of his life. That's all it came down to,' he says. 'Recently, I hired someone with a record, all because of my relationship with Kelley. I view people differently now.'

THE FINAL KICK

Out on the course, just about every body type possible is represented, with inmates ranging from their 20s to their 60s. Some, like Jeff, are remarkably fit. Others are carrying a bit more around the middle. When each runner reaches a noteworthy lap, the announcer says that so-and-so is 'halfway there,' or 'two-thirds of the way there,' and there is a resulting cheer. I wonder if any of this can be heard on the other side of the wall.

Before long, I hear Jeff's footsteps again. Then along comes Gary. 'You gonna get him?' I ask, nodding at Jeff's receding figure. 'He's pretty fast,' Gary says, pulling ahead of me effortlessly. 'I don't know.'

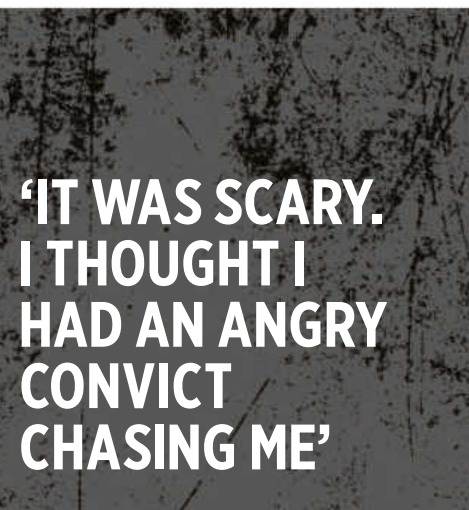
But Gary continues to reel Jeff in, catching him on the final loop. They race side by side. Just ahead of them are two pairs of guys they're about to lap. And just beyond those guys is the narrowest section of the course, where a guard stands next to an open gate. Gary realises that he has just enough time to get around the slower

runners before the gate, so he throws in a surge. Jeff can't quite cover the move. Gary gets through the gate first. Jeff bellows something more suited to the prison yard than these pages. Gary wins the race.

'It was a little scary,' he admits to me on the drive home later. 'At the time I thought Jeff was yelling at me. I thought I had an angry convict chasing me. When he finished, I felt a little sheepish going up to him, but he was so nice. He'd got stuck behind the other guys. So I think he was yelling at them, in frustration, or maybe himself. He wanted to win. And those guys put on a great race. Could you believe all the fruit at the end?' I confess I was not expecting to be served mango.

'When I was in there,' says Kelley Slayton, 'and I knew people from the outside were coming, it was a day of greatness. Those were special days of the year. I'll go back again.'

'After I got out,' he says, 'there were times I would tell myself I was never gonna go



back and run with that wall there. It seems like my whole life I was running with that wall there. In there, when I was running every day, sometimes I'd go through this stage, like, "What do I have to look forward to?" I hate that wall. And I'd imagine flying over that wall and never having to see it again. Then, when I came back for the first time, before the race even started, I went over to it and I was just running my hand down the side of the wall. I don't know if it was a spiritual experience, but this wall, that had been here for so long – and I hated it when I was in there – I was crying about it. I was happy, happy that I'd come back. I care about those guys. I grew up there. I truly feel like I grew up as a person there and when I go back, the toughest thing is leaving.'

If running can truly help people on the path to rehabilitation and redemption then developing that sense of community, of caring what happens to others, is surely an integral part of the process. On that day at the OSP it was a full hour after I had finished my race that I first heard Kip's name. My sweat had long since dried and my IT bands were as stiff as two wet towels left out in the sun when I heard the announcer saying, 'Kip has two laps left.' Everyone got to their feet.


During the race, Kip was just one more man in blue, but now I saw that the man in 37th place out of 37, shuffling along in the shade of the eight-metre wall was the inmate I'd earlier seen pinning the photo of his family to his shorts.

While we watched him circle the yard for the second-last time, the guys told me his story. Kip had been a meth addict. One day he got himself into a high-speed chase and crashed into a police car. So he was sent to the OSP and not long into his

sentence he was diagnosed with renal cell carcinoma. But he beat the cancer. And so, just a few months ago, he and his wife decided to become runners. They wanted to clean up for their kids and work toward something together. And here he was, about to finish his first half marathon.

REASONS TO RUN

We cast aside our cups and settled in behind him. Everyone was a runner, even the people who didn't run, the people in blue jeans – the lap counters, the water station volunteers. Kip didn't acknowledge us. He just stuck his head forward and led us round that final loop. Such was the sense of collective will and emotion that by the time we rounded the barn for the final time, I was almost expecting the wall not to be there.

Two good friends of mine got married that day and at their wedding later on I thought about Kip and all those other men I'd run alongside earlier: how many nights like tonight have they kept from happening? How many joyful moments have they destroyed? For so many of their victims, the losses – of loved ones, of trust, of a sense of safety – are ongoing. But I keep coming back to something James told me: 'There are three reasons we run in here,' he said. 'We're running from our past, and from the stress and depression that come from being in here. We're running to something, doing what we can to feel normal. And we're running to show the world outside that we're improving, in honour of our victims.' The miles may never add up, but that doesn't make the effort any less worthwhile. 

LET'S GET STARTED!



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Coach

REACH YOUR PERSONAL BEST

p70

Marathon plan

All you need to know and the programme to get you ready

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Choc star

Adding chocolate to your menu can be a good thing

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Kill hill

A smart workout to get you up and down

p82

Beat the creak

When it comes to injury, prevention is best



THIS MONTH'S EXPERT PANEL



MARA YAMAUCHI

The British former elite marathoner is now a coach (maraya mauchi.com). **p71**



MARTIN YELLING

Founder of Yelling Performance (yellingperformance.com). **p71**



RUTH MCKEAN

Sports dietitian and adviser to the Scottish Institute of Sport. **p74**



MONICA BEARDEN

Dietitian, co-author of *Chocolate, A Healthy Passion* (Prometheus). **p79**



JASON FITZGERALD

Author of *101 Simple Ways to be a Better Runner* (Kindle, Amazon). **p81**



REED FERBER

Director, Running Injury Clinic at the University of Calgary. **p83**

HOW TO RUN YOUR BEST

MARAT

When you're training for your first marathon or your latest you need to be prepared. RW's resident coach and running sage, **Sam Murphy**, has gathered all the knowledge you need for a great race day

My first marathon was a huge leap into the unknown. It was a small race and I toed the line clutching a packet of glucose tablets, a cheap stopwatch strapped to my wrist.

I finished, but how much better my experience could have been had I known more! Compression, progression, fuelling, tapering, negative splits, positive thinking... These days there's a wealth of information on training – from what sessions to do, how far to run and what to eat and drink, to how to stay motivated, get your pacing right and avoid injuries. It can be overwhelming, so it's easy to end up confused, burnt out or sidelined by strains and sprains.

That's where this guide comes in. We've distilled the wisdom and experience of coaches and experts to bring you a comprehensive guide. If you're a first-timer, you'll find everything you need to know here. But even if you've already run a marathon or two, we guarantee you'll find valuable ways to upgrade your performance, be it a new session, a nutrition tip, a mental strategy or an injury-preventing strength move. Whether or not you follow our 16-week training plan, you'll have the information you need to tweak your training for optimal performance.





HON



THE CHALLENGE

If you're already a runner, you could turn up for most race distances with little preparation. Not so with the big one. 'It's important not to underestimate the challenge of a marathon,' says coach Jeff Gaudette (runnersconnect.net). 'You need to respect the distance and be ready to prepare for it accordingly.'

That means devoting yourself to a training plan for at least 16 weeks. Ideally, you should have a few months of running behind you first. Mara Yamauchi, former Olympic marathoner and a qualified coach (marayamauchi.com), warns that rushing into the marathon without enough experience means you're unlikely to do the distance justice. 'I'd advise building up through shorter distances first – 5Ks, 10Ks and half marathons.'

However, running coach Martin Yelling (yellingperformance.com) doesn't believe a lack of running experience is a reason to rule out a marathon: 'If you've got no background in running, at least four weeks of being regularly active before you begin a marathon plan is better than a standing start,' he says. See *Can you commit* on p72 for more pointers.



ON YOUR MARKS

So what's the best way to prepare to run 26.2 miles?

'You need to start with a reputable plan,' says Yelling. 'Then ask yourself, "Can I fit this plan to my life?" Not, "Can I make myself fit this plan?"'

Yamauchi agrees. 'If you currently run 20 miles a week, your training plan should begin at that level, not 40 miles a week,' she says. 'You need a plan that challenges, but not so much that you can't maintain it week after week without injury or fatigue and underperformance. It's very individual, which is why you need to be ready to tweak a plan to meet your needs.'

And, says coach Russell Holman (runfaster-pb.com), you need to be flexible. 'Many newbie marathoners fall down by being married to their plan,' he says. 'They feel they must complete every session, even when work, illness, injury or family commitments get in the way, and they end up squeezing in sessions on rest days, or making shorter runs longer or harder. This risks burnout or injury, which could scupper your chances of even making the start line.'



Before you set off on any journey, you need a goal. If this is your first marathon, you may not have any goal other than to cross the finish line. But many coaches believe every runner should have a time goal. 'New marathoners often struggle with pace judgement because they have not trained with any focus on pace,' says Holman. 'Using race-pace calculators, along with training performances, helps you predict a realistic finish time, which helps you get the pace right on your training runs, especially long runs.'

Yelling advises seeing your initial goal as an aspiration to be assessed regularly. 'Race performances are part of that assessment, but it's also about monitoring how your body is responding to training,' he says. Our plan (p77) includes a 10K and half marathon to help you assess your marathon potential as training progresses.



TRAINING BASICS

'The most important attribute you'll need to run a marathon is stamina,' says Yelling.

Research in the journal *Sports Medicine* found that almost 98 per cent of the energy required to run a marathon comes from the aerobic energy system. 'Building a strong aerobic foundation – a good engine – should be the mainstay of your physical preparation,' says Yelling.

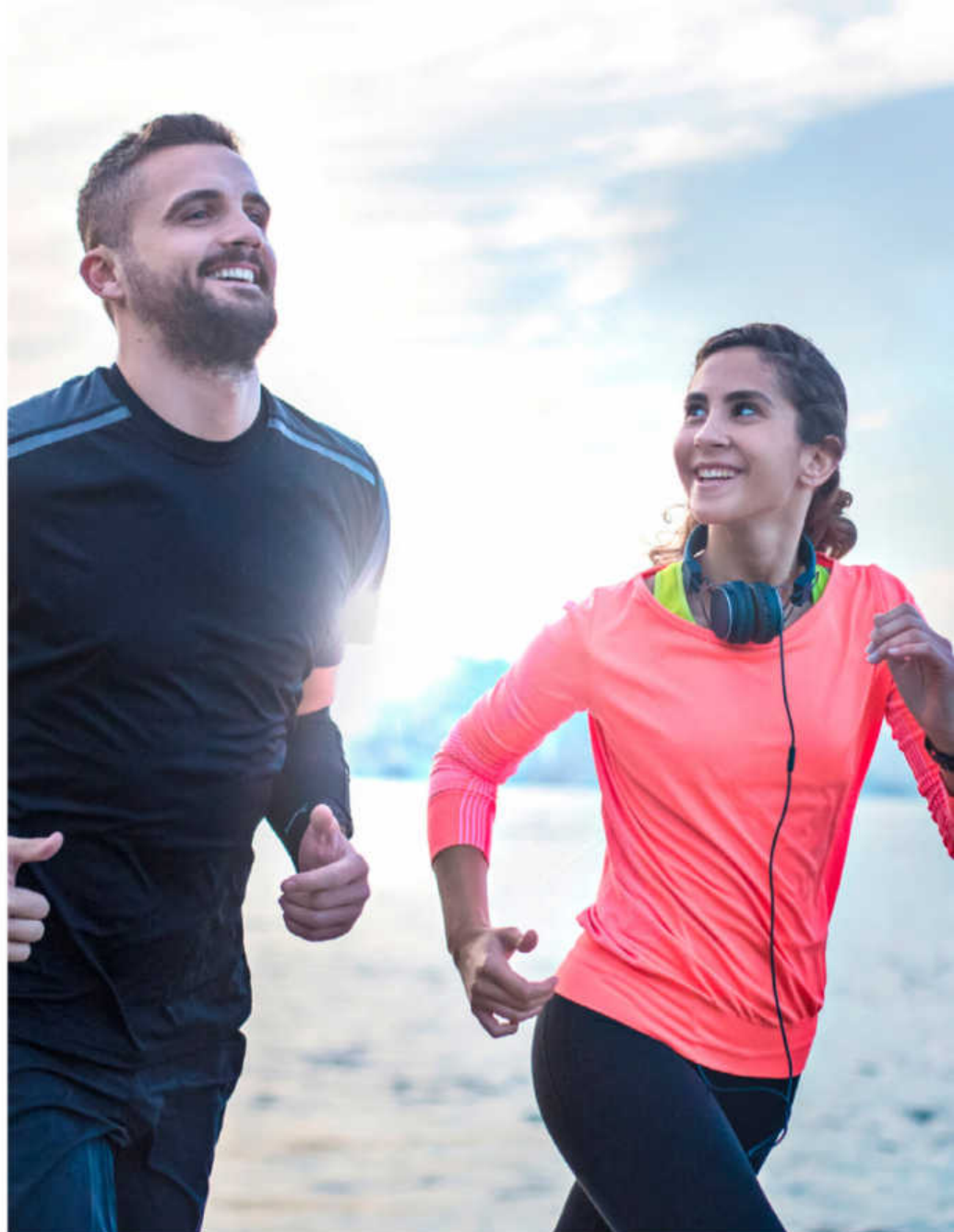
Simply running at a comfortable pace for progressively longer distances would probably get you round, but to run your best marathon 'you need a mixed diet of runs, including long runs, tempo runs, hills and other workouts,' says Gaudette.

Yamauchi agrees. 'If your goal is to run a sub-4 marathon, you'll need to be comfortable at 9min/mile pace,' she says. 'So some of your training should be at that pace. But you also need to do some of your miles faster and some slower.'

Yelling outlines three types of training that need to be included in a marathon plan. The first is the long run – the linchpin of marathon training. 'This is what builds staying power,' says Yelling. It will also increase muscular endurance and teach your body to become a more efficient fat-burning machine.

The majority of long runs should be done at a very easy pace. 'The mistake people often make with these runs is overdoing the intensity,' says Yelling. 'You should be comfortable chatting while you're clocking up the miles.' But Yamauchi prefers variety; she suggests doing some long runs a little faster than 'easy' pace or including some faster final miles or short surges in the second half of an easy run. 'Going out and plodding the same distance every time isn't the best way to improve,' she says. 'Also, play with different terrains, and vary the distances.'

The second type of training involves running at a slightly more challenging



CAN YOU COMMIT?



ARE YOU ACCUSTOMED TO RUNNING AT LEAST THREE DAYS A WEEK?

Suddenly stepping up from one or two sessions a week – or none – to four in week one of your training plan is a bad idea, risking pain or injury. 'Three runs a week is typically the minimum you'll need to commit to,' says Yamauchi.



IS YOUR FAMILY ONSIDE?

For four months your focus will be on marathon training. You'll need to prioritise runs over lie-ins and family strolls, weekend breaks and late nights. 'Accept that your life will change during this time,' says Yamauchi. It will be much easier if your partner, family and significant others will be supportive rather than resentful.



GAUGING GOAL PACE

Pace calculators (www.runnersworld.co.uk/pace-calculators) can be a useful tool. Try to use longer races rather than shorter ones as your prediction distances, and go for terrain/courses that are as similar as possible to the race you'll be running. A 5K race time will predict your marathon time less accurately than a half marathon, while using a hilly offroad 10K time will sell you short. If you have a range of distances to use, plug in all of them and you'll get a predicted 'range' of marathon times, which is more useful to work with than a single figure. And use your most recent times, not your PB from 1994. But Martin Yelling believes pace calculators shouldn't be used in isolation. 'There is huge value in learning to put everything together,' he says. 'Don't just use what you achieved in a set of Yasso 800s, or a single 10K time.'

pace – faster than your goal race pace – for a sustained, but shorter period. 'This is all about building aerobic capacity,' explains Yelling. This might entail a tempo run, a progression run in which the pace increases throughout or it could be tackling the last few miles of a long run at a faster pace: 'Those last few miles teach your body what it will be like at miles 23-26 on race day,' he adds.

The final type of training to include is harder efforts – short periods of work interspersed with recovery. This could be time- or distance-based speedwork or hill work. 'This is all about making your race pace feel easier,' says Yelling. 'It broadens your spectrum of paces, as well as improving strength and running form.'

If you haven't toed the line of a race before, include a couple of races in your marathon buildup. 'A marathon should never be your first race,' says Holman. 'Racing gives you insight into everything from what it's like to run surrounded by other people, to how to cope with pre-race nerves and portable loos, and how to fuel and hydrate on the run.'



AND THE REST

Once you've got the basic ingredients of training sorted, distribute the workload sensibly. Following a hard-easy pattern – with hard sessions and long runs followed by rest or easy days – is the best way of avoiding overdoing things and helps to ensure you recover properly.

Prolonged running causes microtrauma – tiny amounts of bleeding – in your working muscles. With sufficient rest and recovery, they'll heal stronger and be better able to withstand the stress of training. Running also depletes glycogen

stores – but at the same time teaches the body to increase its storage capacity for future runs. 'Rest is training,' says Yelling. 'Without sufficient rest and recovery, your body can't adapt to get fitter and stronger.' 'Sufficient' means different things to different people. A programme may only schedule one easy day after a hard session, but your body may need two, for example. Or what feels fine one week or one month may be too much the next because of other stresses. Always listen to your body, says physio Alison Rose (cspc.co.uk). 'You are more likely to get injured if you run when you're fatigued. Muscle fatigue will increase stress on bones, tendons and ligaments, while mental stress or lack of sleep means the nervous system won't be as responsive, so neither will the muscles.'

Do not increase the volume of your training too quickly. The 10 per cent rule is a good guideline – which means not increasing your mileage (or running time) by more than this per week – but again, your body should have the final say. For example, a long run that leaves you exhausted every Monday and unable to put much effort into the rest of the week's training could do more harm than good.

A great way to monitor all this is to keep a training journal. 'Having that data enables you to find out what makes you improve, what leaves you flat and what causes injuries to flare up,' says Yamauchi. 'But if you're not progressing as much as you expect, it's worth looking beyond the running itself for causes. Often, lifestyle factors are the problem. Not enough sleep, poor nutrition or failing to factor in the demands of work, family and other commitments.'



CROSSING OVER

Not all your training needs to be running. 'Cross-training can provide a cardiovascular challenge without extra stress on the legs,' explains Holman. You might choose to add cross-training to your running plan to increase your training volume. Or you might want to replace some sessions with cross-training because you know you are injury prone or have a niggle. If you are replacing a recovery run, ensure you don't push too hard in your substitute activity, but, says Rose, 'If you are replacing a specific session, mimic it as closely as you can in cross-training, as long as doing so doesn't worsen the problem.' For example, mile reps at tempo pace could become 7-10-minute reps on an exercise bike at a similar effort level.

Most coaches agree that one of the best ways of fortifying yourself against injury is to include strength work. 'It's hard to overestimate the importance of strength and conditioning,' says Yamauchi. 'The main reason is injury prevention, but

If you're training for a marathon you need to give yourself over to it. Ask yourself these questions before you start



ARE YOU INJURY-FREE?

Think carefully about beginning marathon training if you have a niggle. 'For those who are having treatment and seeing improvement, a sensible buildup could be OK, providing you are willing to cross-train where necessary,' says physio Alison Rose (cspc.co.uk). 'But never ignore existing niggles. The priority should be to sort them out.'



IS YOUR DIARY CLEAR?

You'll need to give yourself a clear run for the next four months. So don't sign up for a marathon for which the training is going to clash with other major commitments, such as your wedding or going on safari for a fortnight just when you should be doing your longest runs. Remember, there will be other marathons.

Photography Grant Cornett



it also helps you run better. Marathon running is about efficiency. If you can run just one per cent more efficiently, it will make a big impact on your time.'

Rose recommends an assessment or MOT from a runner-specialist physio before embarking on marathon training. 'Most people have a weakness somewhere that can't cope with the increased load of marathon training,' she says. 'Once a weakness starts to have an effect on the body, it will lead to technique changes, loss of efficiency and, potentially, injury.' Strength work need not mean hitting the weights room, though. 'Body-weight exercises are fine,' says Holman. See *Marathon Maintenance Workout* below for Rose's key strength-building exercises.



EAT, DRINK, RUN

You'll need to take in plenty of nutritious fuel to stay strong.

'It's not necessarily about eating more,' says Ruth McKean, a sports nutritionist at the Scottish Institute of Sport. 'Don't be concerned about the daily ups and downs on the scales, but do monitor your weight as your training increases, and if the trend is consistently down – or up – adjust your calorie intake.'

Getting your 'calorie budget' right is key but, says McKean, so is how you spend it. 'It's not uncommon for runners to go seven or eight hours between lunch and dinner, with a run in-between,' she says. 'Spreading the calories over the day – ensuring you eat three meals and a morning and afternoon snack – is likely

to help you feel better during your runs and prevent overeating after them.'

Runners can obsess over carbs, but there's no need to start buying huge bags of pasta. 'A normal portion of carb-rich food at each meal or snack should meet your needs,' says McKean. Focus on a balance of nutrients – wholegrain carbs, good-quality proteins and healthy fats – with as much fresh, natural food as possible. 'But if there is a certain food you love, make space for it,' says McKean.

What about during the run? It's only when a run exceeds 90 minutes or so that you need to think about fuelling up on the go, says McKean. For longer runs, start to take carbs on board after 40 minutes and every 30-40 minutes thereafter. 'You have carb transporters in the gut that can be trained,' says McKean. 'So don't decide to avoid taking gels or jelly babies until race day – you'll miss out on these adaptations. Taking gels in training also means you'll practise carrying them and figure out what works best for you – a gel belt, pockets or hydration pack.'

You may have read about 'training low', where you don't fuel up beforehand or skip carbs during a run. McKean says most runners don't need to do this. 'The best way to tackle long runs is to run fresh and fuelled. The elites are so well adapted to burning fat and conserving carbs that they are looking for ways of making marginal improvements,' she says.

One sure-fire way of upgrading your running is avoiding dehydration. But, says McKean, it's important to think of

THE ULTIMATE RECOVERY MEAL

Sports nutritionist Ruth McKean's refuelling feast

Salmon fillet with red pepper, leafy green veg and wholegrain rice



A 160g portion of **salmon**. It's rich in omega-3s, which help dampen inflammation, and it's high in protein, for muscle repair.



Large handful of **kale**. Leafy green veggies contain nitrates, the ingredient in beetroot juice that boosts endurance performance.



Chopped **red pepper**. High in recovery-boosting antioxidant vitamins A and C, and the phytonutrient lycopene.



Brown rice (80g dry weight). High in B vitamins and provides 60g of carbs to top up depleted glycogen stores.

MARATHON MAINTENANCE WORKOUT

SINGLE-LEG BRIDGE



Strengthens glutes and hamstrings

Lie on your back, knees bent and feet on the floor. Peel your spine off the floor until you are resting on your shoulder blades. Now extend each leg alternately, keeping your pelvis raised and level throughout. 10 reps x 3.

TORSO ROTATION



Loosens a stiff mid/upper spine

Sit tall on a chair, feet on the floor and hands on thighs. Keeping your head still, rotate through the lower rib cage. Your shoulders will move as your ribs move – they shouldn't lead you into rotation. 20 reps x 3.

QUAD STRETCH



Works the quads with pelvis fixed

Lying on your side, bring your bottom knee level with your hips. Grasp your top ankle and bring the heel to your bottom, keeping your thigh lower than your hip. Tighten your abs and flatten your back. 30 secs x 3 per side.



your hydration on a more general level, rather than just something that kicks in when you put on your trainers. The current advice is to drink to thirst, rather than aiming for set volumes of liquid. McKean recommends monitoring your urine output to determine whether you need to drink more or less. 'If you go to the toilet every three hours or so, producing a decent volume of pale colour, your hydration is fine,' she says. 'If it's less frequently, and your urine is dark, smelly or scant, you're not drinking enough.' Drink little and often during the day rather than downing 500ml before a run.

The long, slow runs give you a chance to experiment and get used to fuelling and hydrating on the run. Later, when you're doing pacier long runs (over 18 miles), it's about establishing race strategy: what to take, how much and when.

'Practise your pre-race fuel strategy before a race,' says McKean. 'This gives you a chance to check whether your strategy works when nerves are present. You might find you want to adjust the timing of your breakfast, for example.'

Post-run refuelling is vital for recovery. Your post-run snack or meal should provide around 50g of carbs and 20g of protein. 'A bowl of cereal with milk, or a tuna sandwich, a natural yoghurt with banana would be fine,' says McKean. 'If you're trying to lose weight, have your meal immediately post-run so you don't eat more calories overall.' McKean's Ultimate Recovery Meal (left), will give you the nutrition you need.

Physio Alison Rose recommends doing these moves 2-3 days a week. (If possible, do the torso rotation and quad stretch daily.) They will build strength, improve balance and help protect you from injury

LUNGE



Builds glute and quad strength

Step into a lunge, inhaling as you lower your front leg to 90 degrees, and take your arms over your head. Breathe out on the way back up, bringing your arms back by your sides and pushing your heel into the floor. 10 reps x 3.

CALF RAISES



Develops calf and Achilles strength

Stand in front of a support and lift one foot off the floor. With the other leg straight, rise onto the ball of your foot, pause, then lower. 20 reps x 3 on each side. Then do the exercise with the leg bent at the knee throughout.

HOP AND HOLD



Improves balance and stability

Stand tall with both feet on the floor. Hop to the right, landing on your right foot, and balancing briefly with good posture before returning the foot to the floor to hop to the left. Try to minimise wobbling. 10 reps x 3.



Studies have found a 'golden window' in the first half hour post-exercise, when muscles are most receptive to replenishing glycogen stores. But, says McKean, timing is less critical if you are not going to be training again in the next eight to 12 hours. 'That's not to say you shouldn't eat something, more that you don't end up starving later on and overeating,' she says.



THE COUNTDOWN

An important part of any marathon training programme is the taper. This is when training winds down, giving you more rest and recovery so you feel fresh and prepared on race day. One study review of 50 research papers in the journal *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise* found that the average performance improvement resulting from a taper was three per cent. That could equate to more than seven minutes off a four-hour marathon. Our plan includes a three-week taper – mileage progressively drops, but there are still some high-intensity sessions to tackle: research shows that maintaining intensity while dropping volume produces the best taper benefits.

Many runners increase their carb intake – 'carb-loading' – in the two to three days before the race. But others have found that it leaves them feeling bloated. 'Carb-loading is best done in conjunction with a sports dietitian, who can help you figure out your needs and devise a plan,' says McKean. 'Otherwise, a

low-risk way of making sure your fuel stores are topped up is to continue eating as if you were still training hard in the final two to three days of your taper, when your mileage is much reduced.'

This is a good time to review your race goal, plan a race strategy, finalise your logistics for race day and get in gear mentally. 'If the race is looming large, think about all the good things you've done in training,' suggests Yamauchi.

Yelling has some simple advice when it comes to race strategy: 'Start at the pace you believe you can maintain to the end,' he says. 'The trouble with marathons is that they feel really easy at the start and really hard towards the end. Avoiding the temptation to go too hard in the early stages when you're feeling comfortable is key.' The statistics back him up. One study found that marathoners who went off just two per cent faster than planned goal pace suffered in the final six miles.

'Run within yourself for at least 20 miles,' advises Yamauchi. 'Then if you feel fabulous, speed up.' The chances are you'll go through some kind of bad patch during the race. If you're prepared for it, you'll cope much better. 'I used to set myself little goals – the next drinks station, the next mile marker,' says Yamauchi. Rose recommends focusing on relaxed breathing and good technique when you're feeling tired. 'Keep your shoulders relaxed and your head up.' That way, you'll also spot the finish line sooner and can prepare yourself for that all-important sprint and photo.

THE RUNNER'S WORLD SCHEDULE AND HOW TO USE IT


This 16-week plan will help runners who can already run consistently for an hour or more to prepare for a marathon. The basic schedule consists of four runs a week – but built-in flexibility allows you to do more or less from week to week. Three of the four sessions are coloured red – they should not be missed. The fourth session is blue – drop this one if you are too busy (or tired) for four runs. The fifth session, in green, is optional.

The plan has a mix of easy long runs and more challenging ones, along with breaks from long runs – replaced with a race or an extra rest day. Swap the days around to suit your time and preference, but do follow the hard-easy rule.

Runs are based on time for the first two months, after which long runs are based on distance so you have a clear idea of how far you are running as the race draws nearer.

If you are less experienced or less fit, focus on the shorter end of the time range suggested, or the lower end of the suggested number of repetitions to begin with.

Effort levels are described according to perceived exertion ratings. The key below should allow you to equate these to pace and HR ranges, should you want to. But, says Yamauchi, don't get too fixated on pace. 'GPS has been a blessing and a curse,' she says. 'It's important to run – and race – sometimes, without constantly checking your watch.'

Never blindly follow the plan if you're feeling very tired or finding the sessions too challenging – or too easy. 'Missing the odd session, or even having to take a week or two off, doesn't have to spell disaster,' says Holman. 

TO TRAIN OR TO REST?

That's the big question when you feel a nigggle developing. Do you back off from training, or push on through? Here's how you know

Few of us get through training for a marathon without having to take time off for an injury or illness at some point. 'The more time you have off, the more gradually you need to get back into your training,' says Rose. 'For example, if you've had two or three weeks off, I'd suggest running only alternate days for the first week back. Then increase to a training-to-rest ratio of 2:1 days and then 3:1 days.'

Start back with a few short easy runs, to start to increase the load on the body again, and to check the injury has healed before starting to push yourself. If

you cross-trained during your time off, you'll have lost less fitness, but it's still important to reintroduce running gradually. Runners who have lost a lot of time – particularly during the key weeks, when mileage is ramping up – may need to reconsider their goal. Far from copping out, it takes bravery to adjust a goal, or indeed to decide it's wiser to cut your losses and save your marathon for a later date.

If you get a nigggle, ice it as soon as possible, says Rose. She offers these guidelines to help you decide how to proceed thereafter.

TRAIN IF... it's more of a small ache than a pain and movement is not affected. 'This should be fairly safe to train on, or to ease by cross-training or taking a day or two off,' says Rose.

REST IF... it's a sharp pain that doesn't ease when you slow down. 'Rest and ice for 24-48 hours,' says Rose. 'If possible, rest the injured area but cross-train to stay fit.' Don't simply rest for weeks. 'If it goes on that long it's an injury; there's a reason why it's not going away,' says Rose. 'A physio can tell you how to manage the issue and what training you can do.'

KEY TO CHART

- ESSENTIAL
- IMPORTANT
- OPTIONAL

LEVEL 1 (L1) EASY: effortless jog pace. Should feel very comfortable, you can talk easily. Probably slower than race pace

LEVEL 2 (L2) STEADY: comfortable. Still conversation pace but slightly more breathless. Likely to be 30 secs/mile either side of proposed marathon pace

LEVEL 3 (L3) CHALLENGING: controlled effort. 'Comfortably hard.' You should be able to utter a short phrase. Between 10K pace and 5-15 secs slower/mile

Level 4 (L4) TOUGH: a hard effort. You can only get out 1-2 words. Likely to be 5K pace or 5-15 secs faster/mile



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	Easy run, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	10 x 1 minute at L4, with 1-minute recovery jogs (Playing field, level trail or track, ideally)	Rest	4-5 x 6 mins at L3 with 1-minute recovery jog	Rest	Easy run: 40 mins	Long run L1: 75-90 mins
WEEK 2	Easy run rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	Hills: 8 x 45 secs L4. (Steep but not so much it compromises form.) Untimed walk/recovery jogs	Rest or cross-training	Easy run L2 – 60 mins plus 4 x 60m strides	Rest	Parkrun or 5 x 1km at L3	Long run L1: 85-100 mins (Head for trail/softer ground)
WEEK 3	Easy run, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	3 x 2 mins (2-min recovery jog), 6 x 1 min (1-min recovery jog) at L4	Rest	3-4 x 8 mins L3, with 90-sec recovery jog	60 mins (or 6 miles, whichever comes first) L2	Rest	Long run L1: 100-120 mins
WEEK 4	Easy run, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	Out-and-back run: 15 mins L2, then turn and gradually speed up to L3 to arrive back in less than 15 mins	Rest	2 x 90 secs, 2 x 60 secs, 2 x 30 secs hills L4, with untimed walk/jog recoveries	Easy run: 60 mins (or 6 miles, whichever comes first) L1. 4 x 60m strides	Rest	10K race
WEEK 5	Easy, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	6 x 2 mins L4, with 2-min recovery jogs	Rest	12-, 10-, 8- min efforts L3 with 2-min recovery jogs	Rest	Easy run: 50 mins (or 6 miles, whichever comes first) L2. 3 x 60m strides	Long run L1: 120-130 mins
WEEK 6	Rest or cross-training 30-45 mins L1	5 x 3 mins continuous hills (run up and down a 50-80m hill at L3 effort. Rest for 1 min between sets)	Easy recovery run 30 mins L1	4-5 x 1 mile winders (ie, make each mile rep a couple of seconds faster than the last) L3	Rest	Easy run: 45 mins L2, with 6 x 30-second surges	Long run L1: 120-130 mins, with last 20 mins at goal marathon pace
WEEK 7 (EASY WEEK)	Easy, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L2	5 x 3 mins L4, with 2-min recovery jogs	Rest	12-, 10-, 8-, 6-min efforts L3, with 2 min recovery jogs	Easy run: 60 mins (or 5 miles, whichever comes first) L1	Steady run up to 6 miles L2, or Parkrun (If you do Parkrun, swap Thursday session for today's steady run)	Rest or cross-training.
WEEK 8	Easy run: 60 mins (or 6 miles, whichever comes first) L1	Continuous hills 5-, 4-, 3-, 2-, 1-min bouts, with 1-min rest between sets	Rest	Progression run: 3 miles L1, 2 miles L2, 1 mile L3	Rest	5 miles L1. 4 x 60m strides	Long run 140-150 mins with negative split: first half L1, second half slightly moving towards L2
WEEK 9	Easy run: 5 miles (or 50 mins, whichever comes first) L1	6 x 3 mins L4, with 2-min recovery jogs	Rest	3 x 12 mins at L3, with 2-min recovery jogs	Rest	Easy run, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	Long run L1: 160-180 mins (stop at 20 miles)
WEEK 10	Rest	Easy recovery run 40 mins	Out-and-back run: 15-20 mins L2, turn and aim to get back to start point 30-90 secs faster	Easy, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L2	Rest	20 min run with strides	Half-marathon race - plus warm-up and cool-down DRESS REHEARSAL
WEEK 11	Rest	Easy run: 5 miles or 45 mins, max L1	Progression run: 3 miles L1, 2 miles L2, 1 mile L3	Recovery run 30 mins L1 or equivalent cross-training	Fartlek: 45 mins, with hill and flat efforts; 3 of each at L4 of 30-60 secs, with easy running in-between	Rest	Long run: 20 miles L1
WEEK 12	Rest or cross-training	8 x 3 mins L4, with 2-min recovery jogs	Easy run: 5 miles L1. 4 x 60m strides	Steady run at marathon pace 6-7 miles	Rest	Parkrun or 3 x 1-mile winders. Begin at current 10K pace and increase pace each mile	Long run: 14-16 miles with negative split
WEEK 13	Easy, rest or cross-training 45-60 mins L1	3 x 2 mins (2-min recovery jog), 6 x 1 (1-min recovery jog) at L4	Rest	2 x 2 miles at L3	Easy run: 60 mins (or 6 miles, whichever comes first) L1	Rest	Long run: 20 miles, with last 3 miles at goal pace
WEEK 14	Rest or cross-training	Recovery run: 30 mins	2 x 2 mins (2-min recovery jog), 6 x 1-min (1-min recovery), 4 x 30 secs (30-sec recovery), all L4	Rest	Out-and-back run: 15-20 mins L2, turn and aim to get back to start point 30-90 secs faster	Easy rest or cross-training	Long run: 2 hours max (Offroad desirable)
WEEK 15	Easy run, rest or cross-training (Limit mileage to 4 miles)	4 x 90 seconds L4	Rest	30, 20, 10 mins L2, with last 10 mins slightly faster than marathon pace	Rest	Easy run: 45 minutes L1	Short 'long' run: 9 miles max L2
WEEK 16	Easy run, rest or cross-training	Out-and-back run 30 mins: 15 mins out at L1, return at marathon pace	Rest	Easy run: 30 mins L1 with 4 x 30-second surges	Rest	Easy 20-min run with 4 x 60m strides	RACE DAY!

GO COCOA NUTS

Satisfy your craving for chocolate with a nutrient boost and no weight gain

Chocolate-loving runners have had a lot to celebrate of late. In 2011, the University of Cambridge reported that eating dark chocolate can lower rates of stroke, high blood pressure and heart disease, thanks to antioxidants called flavonols. The same year, a study published in *The Journal of Physiology* found that moderate chocolate consumption may cause muscle changes that improve athletic endurance. And a study published in 2012 discovered that people who eat chocolate a few times per week weigh less than those who rarely indulge.

Of course, reaping these health benefits hinges on eating the right type and amount of chocolate. 'I recommend up to 30g of dark chocolate per day or roughly one tablespoon of cocoa a day,' says Dr David Katz, director of Yale University's Prevention Research Center and a noted chocolate researcher. Stick with dark chocolate that's at least 60 per cent cocoa, to get the highest concentration of antioxidants, fibre and magnesium. Unfortunately for fans of milk chocolate, its added fat and sugar content dilute the beneficial effects, says Katz.

It's also key to stick with that 30g serving – it contains around 160 calories and 10 grams of fat; eating any more can lead to unwanted weight gain. To stretch your chocolate allowance, we've created four delicious desserts that offer the benefits of dark chocolate while keeping calories and fat in check, so you stay fit, run your best and still satisfy that chocolate craving.



Eat better

After a tough run, drink low-fat chocolate milk. Studies show it contains the ideal combination of carbs and protein to help speed recovery.



YOU CRAVE: A BAR OF CHOCOLATE

If you love nutty chocolate bars, try homemade dark chocolate bark (yep, bark). Mix chopped dried fruit (like cranberries) and nuts (such as walnuts) into melted dark chocolate and pour into a baking tray lined with wax paper. Once cool, break the bark into pieces. Or dip a banana in melted dark chocolate and roll it in chopped nuts (shown left). 'Dark chocolate and nuts are great partners,' says Monica Bearden, co-author of *Chocolate: A Healthy Passion* (Prometheus Books).

'Together they provide vitamins, minerals, protein, healthy fats and arginine, an amino acid that works with the flavonols in chocolate to aid in muscle growth and repair.'

BOOST IT Add dried tart cherries to the bark to provide your body with antioxidants. Research also suggests tart cherries can reduce post-run muscle and joint pain.



YOU CRAVE: PUDDING

Single-pot chocolate puddings are a relatively healthy snack. But by making your own with one or two unexpected ingredients, you can create a more nutrient-dense alternative. Wilson makes a high-protein chocolate pudding by blending 350g firm tofu, 250ml soya milk, 200g sugar, up to 60g cocoa powder, one teaspoon of vanilla extract and a quarter of a teaspoon of salt.

Gleason's version ups the healthy fat and fibre with avocado. She blends two large peeled and pitted avocados with 30g cocoa powder, 80g maple syrup and 1.5 teaspoons of orange zest. Avocados also provide vitamins B, E and K.

BOOST IT Add spices like cinnamon to build flavour. 'Anytime you are able to use spices, you are getting more antioxidants and potent phytochemicals,' says Bearden.



YOU CRAVE: BROWNIES

It's not hard to make a brownie from scratch that's more satisfying and nutritionally sound than your usual supermarket choice. The secret ingredient? Black beans. Typical brownies contain too much saturated fat, says dietitian Claudia Wilson, but by substituting puréed black beans for half the butter in a recipe, you can create a dessert that's moist but higher in fibre and lower in fat. 'With the rich flavour of the cocoa powder, you can't taste the beans at all,' she says. 'Blend them in a food processor until they're smooth.' Don't like black beans? Use puréed prunes.

BOOST IT Try culinary nutritionist Sue Ann Gleason's recommendation: use a mix of flours that includes buckwheat; the gluten-free grain adds an earthy, nutty flavour, and diets that contain buckwheat are linked to a lowered risk of high cholesterol and high blood pressure.



YOU CRAVE: MILKSHAKE

Milkshakes are high in saturated fat.

But you can use fat-free milk or low-fat frozen yoghurt in place of full-fat dairy. Bearden makes a protein-packed shake using fresh fruit, skimmed milk, vanilla-flavoured whey protein, Greek yoghurt and antioxidant-rich cocoa powder.

Gleason blends frozen bananas, raspberries, ripe pear, cocoa powder, Swiss chard and coconut milk. Swiss chard and coconut milk are rich in magnesium, a mineral that may help relieve muscle cramps.

BOOST IT Add a tablespoon of nut butter for healthy fats and protein. Or try a tablespoon of omega-3-rich seeds such as ground flaxseeds or chia seeds. 'Chia seeds contain protein, antioxidants and minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium and iron, speeding recovery and replenishing minerals lost during strenuous exercise,' says Gleason.



CHOC-FULL OF GOODNESS

Healthy uses for bars, bits and cocoa powder

01/Chocolate chips and bars

- Select chocolate with 60 per cent or higher cocoa content or use unsweetened chocolate, which tastes bitter on its own but can be used to add great flavour when you are cooking or baking.
- Add bittersweet or unsweetened chocolate to Mexican mole sauce.
- Stir into homemade barbecue sauce.
- Mix chocolate chips in homemade granola bars.

02/Cacao nibs

- You can find these crunchy, slightly bitter nibs – broken-up pieces of cacao beans – in many supermarkets.
- Sprinkle them on pudding or yoghurt. Add to trail mix.
- Top homemade chocolate bark with them.

03/Cocoa powder

- Stick with all-natural cocoa powder, which contains more antioxidant flavonols than sweetened cocoa powder.
- Stir it into your porridge or morning coffee.
- Use it in homemade hot chocolate.
- Blend it into dry rubs to flavour meats.

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THE UPS AND DOWNS OF HILLS

Monster hills will pose no problems if you add these exercises to your routine

Unless you stick to the track or a treadmill – or Norfolk – hills will appear on your routes. If you lack strength, your form can falter: you might lean too far forward going up and too far back going down, a combo that wastes energy and increases injury risk, says Jason Fitzgerald, coach and founder of strengthrunning.com. His five-move routine will strengthen key muscles to power you up and down.



SIDE LUNGE

WHY Works quads and glutes

HOW Holding dumbbells, step to your left, bending your left knee until your thigh is parallel to the floor. Push off the left foot and return to the starting position, then repeat on the right.

Do 10 reps on each side.



SQUAT

WHY Works the glutes, hamstrings and quads.

(Quads are the primary muscles used for running uphill.)

HOW Holding dumbbells and with feet shoulder-width apart, shift your weight to your heels as you lower down until your thighs are parallel to the ground. Stand up. **Do 25 reps.**



STEP UP

WHY Develops powerful quads for stronger climbing.

HOW Holding dumbbells, place your right foot on a box or step. Drive your weight into your heel as you step up. Squeeze your glutes at the top. Step back down in a controlled manner. Repeat with the left foot. **Do 10 reps on each side.**



DEADLIFT

WHY Works the hamstrings, glutes and calves to aid stability.

HOW Stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Hinge at the hips and bend the knees to pick up dumbbells. As you stand, pinch your shoulder blades together. Lower back down, tapping the dumbbells on the ground before standing again. **Do 25 reps.**



FORWARD LUNGE

WHY Builds the strength that helps you maintain form.

HOW Holding dumbbells, step forward with your left foot, then bend your left knee until your hamstring is parallel to the floor. Keep your left knee behind the toes; your right knee should just touch the ground. **Do 10 reps on each side.**



GET THE BETTER OF INJURY

How to recover from (and/or prevent) common running injuries

If you suffer an injury, your doctor may recommend cutting back on mileage or even taking a complete break from running.

While downtime gives you a chance to mend, rest shouldn't be the only part of your recovery plan. 'If injured runners don't address muscle weaknesses and faulty mechanics, they're almost guaranteed to reinjure themselves,' says Colleen Brough, assistant professor at Columbia University's physical therapy programme in the US. Here, running-injury specialists outline how to put common injuries to rest – for good. Follow the 'active recovery' advice as you ease back in and build up your mileage. When you're at full operating speed, add the 'relapse prevention' tip to stay healthy.

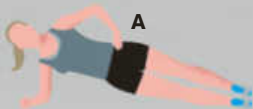
Words **Beth Dreher** Photography **Mitch Mandel**
Illustrations **Andrea Manzati**



ILIOTIBIAL-BAND SYNDROME

ACTIVE RECOVERY

When running, increase the width of your steps by a few centimetres to reduce the friction between the IT band and thighbone, says Reed Ferber, director of the Running injury Clinic in Calgary, Canada.



RELAPSE PREVENTION

Side planks (A) strengthen the muscles on the outside of the hips. **RUNNER BEWARE** Skip the hills. On inclines, the knee stays bent longer, which increases tension in the IT band, Ferber says. Also avoid running circles in the same direction on tracks and roads with high cambers (the slopes that allow water to run off).

HAMSTRING STRAIN

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Exercises such as planks, clamshells and bridges will strengthen weak glutes and hips, which are common sources of hamstring strains. It may be helpful to work on agility. In a University of Wisconsin, US, study, runners with acute hamstring strains who completed a rehab plan that included agility work recovered faster and were less likely to be reinjured than those who didn't work on agility.



RELAPSE PREVENTION

Do bridge walkouts (B). Lie on your back, with knees bent, hips raised, and with a straight line from knees to neck. Now walk your feet away from you; the straighter your legs and lower your hips, the harder it is. This strengthens the hamstring because it's lengthening, which is consistent with the action of the muscle when you're running. **RUNNER BEWARE** Avoid doing speedwork until your pain is completely gone. 'The hamstring most often gets injured when the muscle is quickly lengthened, as it is when sprinting,' says Brough.

MEDIAL TIBIAL STRESS SYNDROME (SHIN SPLINTS)



ACTIVE RECOVERY

Increase the number of steps you take per minute by five to 10 per cent. Count your steps, do the maths, then search Spotify for, say, '175 beats per minute', to find songs to listen to while running. Riding a stationary bike can help, too (C). 'Being on an indoor bike can help you get a feel for a high cadence, which you can carry over to running,' says Brough. 'On the bike, focus on activating the abdominals and the glutes, which help stabilise the pelvis and improve running mechanics.' **RELAPSE PREVENTION** Runners with an exaggerated heel strike are most likely to suffer from shin splints. Increasing your cadence will lead to a shorter stride length. **RUNNER BEWARE** 'If you return to running too quickly, this injury can quickly turn into a stress fracture,' says Brough. Follow each running day with two rest or cross-training days.

PATELLO-FEMORAL PAIN SYNDROME (RUNNER'S KNEE)

ACTIVE RECOVERY

'Hip and core strength are vital for tackling knee pain,' says Ferber. Three times a week, do three sets of 10 reps of each of these exercises: standing hip abduction (D), standing hip external rotation, and standing hip internal rotation (get instructions for these moves at www.runnersworld.co.uk/hips).



RELAPSE PREVENTION

Walk backwards uphill or on a treadmill set to a five per cent incline (hold the handrails to avoid tripping). This isolates the muscles on the front of your thighs that help keep the kneecap in proper alignment. 'While targeting the hips is key, research tells us strengthening the quads is also an important part of recovery from runner's knee,' says Ferber. **RUNNER BEWARE** While you're in pain, avoid downhill runs. 'They increase the force on the knee joint and slow down recovery,' says Ferber.

PLANTAR FASCIITIS

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Use over-the-counter orthotics in your shoes as you rebuild mileage. 'Most athletes I've treated with plantar fasciitis have recovered more quickly with orthotics,' says Ferber. Once the pain has subsided, remove the inserts. Use a foam roller before running to loosen calves and Achilles tendons. Roll the injured foot over a frozen water bottle for one minute four to six times a day to reduce swelling.

RELAPSE PREVENTION

Do heel raises (E) to strengthen the calf muscles that support the tissue on the bottom of the foot. Standing tall, rise up on your toes for two secs, then slowly lower. Work up to three sets of 20 reps four days a week. 'Do this exercise after a run or workout,' says Ferber.



RUNNER BEWARE

Don't walk around barefoot, which can further strain injured tissue, says Ferber. And throughout the day, opt for supportive shoes over flip-flops or high heels.

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2015

So here it is, our roundup of the best gear and gadgets from the last 12 months, plus RW staff pick the items they now can't run without



1 LIJA Sprint Capris

£78, lijastyle.com

We picked these out but, to be frank, we could have chosen almost anything from Lija's range of women-only fitness clothing, such as the brand's ability to blend high-end technical expertise with up-to-the-minute fashion.



2 2XU GHST S/S Top

£45, 2xu.co.uk

Compression-gear specialist 2XU has branched out into standard running apparel – this super-light (86g) tee is typical of the range. Quality material, low-key design and it feels great.

3 The Grid Camo

£39.99, physicalcompany.co.uk

A cool new design for the king of self-massage rollers. Tougher than many other brands, it has padded zones to tackle different areas and help break up knotted muscle fibres post-training.



4 Magnesium Oil Sport Spray

£12.49, nutricentre.com

Spray some of this on the crooks of your arm, the back of your neck and any sore parts before bed; it's designed to ease aches and pains, and even to help you drift off to sleep.



5 Adidas Ultra Boost

£130, adidas.co.uk

Adidas went big on promoting this model in 2015, and with good reason: it's outstanding. The blend of snug, breathable knitted upper that gently but securely caresses your foot, fantastic comfort, and incredible energy return and cushioning from the 'Boost' midsole foam make this a near perfect long-distance shoe.



6 Moov Now

£45, welcome.moov.cc

This won Editor's Choice in our recent review of fitness trackers. It can be worn on the wrist or the ankle, has an astonishing array of functions, exceptional accuracy, a six-month battery life and is great value for the price.



Words Kerry McCarthy



Roll Recovery R8

£95 (including shipping), rollrecovery.com
This self-massage device is a fixture at RW; rare is the lunchtime when a team member isn't using it after a run. It gives you more control over pressure than a foam roller: the eight adjustable wheels clamp either side of any part of your leg and can be rolled back and forth for myofascial release and to ease muscular tension.



New Balance Beacon Tights

£70, newbalance.co.uk
There's lots to love about these tights. No chafing, no washing-induced bagginess and the high-vis glow-in-the-dark strips on the calves can be charged before a run by leaving them under a light.



runnersworld.co.uk



Ashmei Merino + Carbon Running Jersey

£75, ashmei.com

Ashmei tested this on athletes running desert ultras and found the mix of merino and carbon wicked sweat away 10 times faster than merino alone. It's naturally temperature-regulating, so you can wear it in all conditions, and it's incredibly soft.



Proviz Reflect 360 Running Jacket

£79.99, provizsports.com

The most blindingly high-vis jacket we've come across. The entire thing lights up like Blackpool illuminations when picked out by car or street lights, so you can be sure that you'll be seen on the run. It also does an excellent job of keeping the weather out.



11 Suunto Ambit 3

£325, wiggles.co.uk

With this model Suunto gets the balance just right – this is a top-of-the-

range watch that contains an impressive number of functions but is surprisingly easy to use. It's equally at home on the road or up in the mountains, so is well worth the investment if you're an all-terrain runner.



12 Mammoth Performance 20 Mattress

From £839, mammothmattress.co.uk

Pricey? Sure. Worth it? Oh yes. The firm, medical-grade foam mattress evenly distributes pressure and helps alleviate pain, while a temperature-regulation coating stops you overheating. Bliss.

13 Patagonia 9 Trails Pack

£65, patagonia.com

Versatile enough to work as well during a long day on the trails as it does on a five-mile run-commute. This 15L pack doesn't bounce around and there are some well-positioned front pockets for easy access on the run.



14 2 Toms Sport Shield

£13.99 for 43ml, 2tomsuk.com

One of the best sports lubes around. The roller glides easily and the lube leaves only a thin film on the skin, which is quickly absorbed. It's non-sticky, washes off easily and, most importantly, it keeps chafing firmly at bay.



15 Nutribullet

£99.99, buynutribullet.co.uk

Just in case you've been living under a rock, this is the standout nutrition gadget of the year. It's a cross between a food processor, juicer and blender, and, crucially, retains all the nutrients and wastes nothing. Oh, and it's easy to use and clean.

16 Hoka One One Clifton 2

£89.99, ultramarathonrunningstore.com

You know you're onto a winner when one of your shoes sells out both in the US and here soon after release. The launch of the Clifton – a superbly comfy, light, neutral, maximal road shoe – brought Hoka One One to the attention of the masses for the first time. The Clifton 2 adds some tweaks but doesn't mess with the winning formula.



17 Million Mile Light

£18, millionmilelight.com

We loved this tiny-but-mighty light that clips onto your belt or clothing and uses the movement of your body to power itself for miles... and miles. In theory, it'll never run out.

STAFF PICKS

The stuff that team RW raved about this year



A Kerry McCarthy,
Commissioning
Editor

SIS GO Energy + Electrolyte Gel
£39.99 for 30,
scienceinsport.com
This ticks the boxes for taste and consistency, and the 22g of carbs perk me up.

E Andy Dixon,
Editor

Garmin Forerunner 920XT
£389.99, garmin.com
A top-end training device that I found to be blissfully simple and reassuringly accurate to use, with a range of useful functions that, frankly, blew me away.

B Sam Murphy,
Section Editor

Gore Lady Air Windstopper Soft Shell Jacket
£129.99, goreapparel.co.uk
(check price)
A brilliantly versatile jacket: it's light, has a tailored, feminine fit, and is water-resistant and windproof. Decent pocket, too.

F Georgia Scarr,
Deputy Digital
Editor

Flipbelt £25,
theflipbelt.co.uk
The spacious Flipbelt is ideal for my on-the-run hoarding tendencies: it has 360-degree storage and sits neatly, so the contents don't bounce around.

C Katherine Kendall, Brand
Manager

Yurbuds Inspire 100
£16.99, uk.jbl.com
These well-priced headphones deliver great audio while allowing you to hear ambient noise, so you stay safe. And they sit securely in the ear.

G Andrea Sullivan,
Commercial
Director

Shock Absorber Ultimate Run Bra
£35, lessbounce.com
In my view, this is the best sports bra around. Nothing comes close for comfort, support and fit.

D John Carroll,
Chief Sub
Editor

DHB Slice Rucksack (15L)
£19.99, wigggle.co.uk
The Slice is light, neat, slim and surprisingly robust. The shoulder, chest and waist straps are easily adjustable and it sits snugly in the middle of the back.

H Joe Mackie,
Deputy
Editor

Asics Gel Hyperspeed 6
£73.94, amazon.co.uk
It's rare to fall in love on a first run, but it happened when I tried these super-light, ultra-responsive speedsters. They are my go-to (short) race shoes. **RW**

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Parkrun: a Celebration

£19.99, wiggle.co.uk

Ten years of Parkrun are celebrated in this book, produced by a volunteer team of photographers, journalists and designers.



Minipresso Espresso

£49.99, thefowndry.com

This portable espresso machine needs no power source: fill it with ground beans, add hot water and pump out your favourite brew.



PRESENT & CORRECT



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Life Venture towel

£20, gooutdoors.co.uk

The makers say this towel absorbs nine times its weight and dries eight times faster than an ordinary towel. It's also antibacterial.



Live On sports T-shirt

£19.99, poppyshop.org.uk

This breathable running T-shirt features the Live On slogan and poppy on front and back. All profits go to the Royal British Legion.



Nathan Wrist Runner

£8.99, thinksport.co.uk

This high-vis wristband, made from an ultra-stretchy, moisture-wicking fabric, is ideal for holding keys, coins and cards.



Event clips

£2.99, eventclip.net

Better than safety pins: these light, recycled plastic clips keep your race bib securely in place and won't leave marks on your kit.



Scrubba

£34, onestopscouting.co.uk

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Muc-Off creams

£24 each, muc-off.com

There are four in the range, the first of which is a warm-up cream. The other three contain amino acids that are absorbed through the skin.



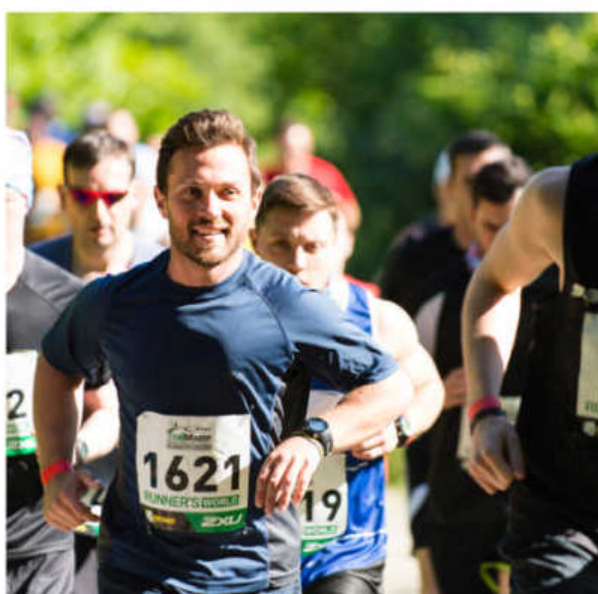
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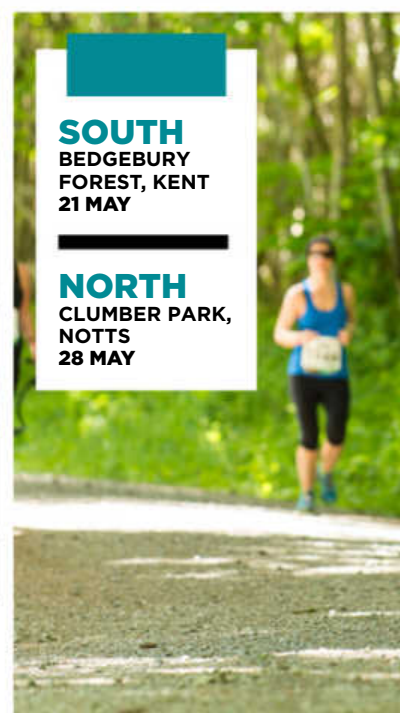
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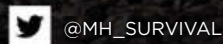
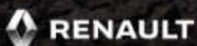
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ROUTE RECCE **p101** RACE PICK **p102** RACE FINDER **p109**

RACE

LET YOUR TRAINING LOOSE



WAY OUT WEST

A race on the wind-lashed west coast of Ireland at the beginning of March? It was an offer **John Carroll** couldn't refuse



PUB'S OPEN!
But first, a quick 10K



DECKED OUT
A town ready for the runners



HOUSE BROKEN
The runners, on the other hand, are in fine form



Kinvara is small village on the west coast of Ireland, about 18 miles south of Galway city. It is, at first blush, a wildly optimistic if not loopily eccentric location for a running event (the Rock and Road Kinvara Half Marathon and 10K). There are several seemingly solid reasons for this rush to judgement: accommodation is rather limited here (many runners have to stay in Galway); some of the roads on the route have seen less care, and more tractors, than is good for them; and the race is held in March, a time of year in this part of Ireland when the weather, given a choice between blowing a furious gale and raining so hard that umbrellas fold up and head home, will do both in very close concert. So how, then, was this the most enjoyable race experience I have ever had?

Perhaps it was down to the relaxed feeling in the village, as if nothing of any import was happening at all. 'You're here for the race?' asked the guy behind the desk in the Kinvara Guest House, where I was staying. It's on the town square, but so is almost everything else.

'I am,' I answered, expecting him to welcome me and tell me how important the event was to this small town at this gloomy time of year. But no.

'Grand, so. Room 13. Here's your key.'

Maybe it was the way the locals in this pleasant but not particularly striking village struck up conversations with these visiting runners, as if it was the most natural thing in the world to go around talking to strangers. Or perhaps it had something to do with Kinvara's pubs: I counted 11, four of which I could see from my room without too much straining of the neck muscles. Another one may have opened since I began writing this article. Whatever the reason or reasons, I'm doing this event again.

Rain was forecast for race day (I was doing the 10K) and as I walked down to the start line, by the quay, brooding, rain-swollen clouds were rolling in, but they skedaddled across the sky as if they were late for a storm in the east. The wind, however, was present and belligerently

THE RUNDOWN

Kinvara Rock and Road (10K)

Ireland (2015 stats)

First man Steve Mitchell 31:17

First woman Helen Corbett 39:39

Starters 838

Finishers 838
(100% finished)



Finishing Stats

- 45 mins 6%
- 45:00-59:59 48%
- 60:00-74:59 33%
- 75:00-89:59 7%
- 90:00+ 6%

The French runner said, 'I have... too much Guinness'



incorrect. Scoffing at the conditions, 838 of us lined up for the 10K, funnelled into a narrow laneway that led up and out of the village. To put that number in context, the population of Kinvara is 1,160. As we waited for the deeply civilised noon start, the French runner beside me shook his head and said, his voice heavy with regret (and maybe a touch of pride), 'I have... too much Guinness last night.'

'Well, sure, you look great on it,' replied a local liar. And then we were off.

The first part of the course took us along the N67, the main road through the village. It had not been closed to traffic, but it was well managed – cars stopped and lined up as we passed, as if queuing for petrol in the 1970s, but with far greater patience. After a couple of kilometres we turned onto smaller roads that took us

through some sturdy, ruggedly good-looking scenery and past the occasional home: kids stood in the long gardens cheering on uncertainly as they held up signs (one read, *Come on, Everyone!*, which sweetly summed up the atmosphere of the day). We also passed lots of animals: the dogs barked with idiotic delight, the cows urinated in mighty streams and the horses hung their wise, doleful heads over hedges and watched, nodding, as we passed: four legs good, two legs useless.

At about halfway there was a water station and though there were no bins to drop bottles into, most were discarded in one or two spots close by, as the organisers had requested. I confess I missed with my throw and startled a goat in a field.

We had been warned about a tough section between kilometres six and seven

but I was having such a grand time, staying in touch with a runner who was moving just a little quicker than I was, that I did not notice if I was making an extra effort.

The final section took us back to the town, with the coast on our left offering some truly knockout views. The wind was now on our backs, so I put on a burst for the last few hundred metres, which were lined with people from the town. I finished at 12:50pm, was back in my room by 1pm and had a gleaming pint of Guinness in my hand by 1:20. There were, after all, a lot of pubs to visit. The rain came pounding down later on and the wind continued to try to flatten the town, but no-one cared. And since the local camogie (hurling for women and just as fierce) team won the All-Ireland Senior A Schools Final that same day, there was plenty to celebrate.

This is not the most beautiful course you'll ever run, nor the slickest event (there's no bag drop, for example), and you can't take your eye off the weather for a second, but the Kinvara Rock and Road is, simply, the craic. As an Irishman, I can offer no higher compliment.

● **Run it** The next Kinvara Rock and Road half marathon and 10K take place on March 5, 2016. Visit rockandroad.ie

THE LOWDOWN GO WEST



GET THERE

Aer Lingus and Ryanair fly to Shannon airport from various UK airports. From there a taxi journey will take about 45 minutes. It's about €80 euro, so consider renting a car.



STAY

Not too many local options. Try the Kinvara Guesthouse, a luxury B&B in the middle of the village. Rooms from €60 a night. kinvaraguesthouse.ie



SIGHTSEE

Go down to the water and look out. The view is quite beautiful. Otherwise, take in the sights in the many, many bars in the village.



FUEL

The Pier Head Bar and Restaurant has a very fine menu with plenty of fresh seafood and meat. There are vegetarian options, too. A starter and main course will set you back about €30.



WARM UP

Leave your B&B and follow the coast road. Glorious.

2016
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ICELAND

SUZUKI MIDNIGHT SUN RUN
June 23rd 2016

REYKJAVÍKUR MARAÐON ISLANDSBANKA
AUGUST 20TH 2016

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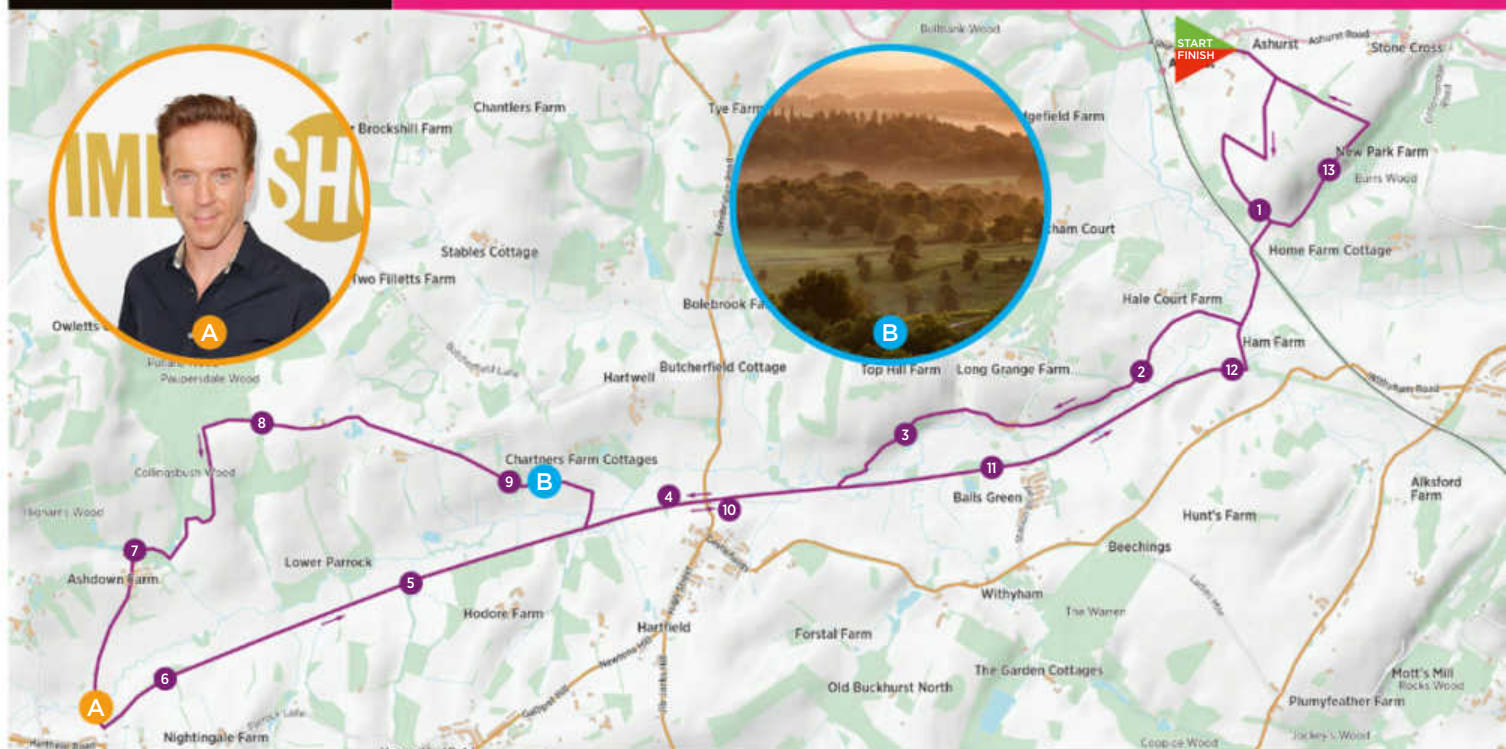
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Race organiser John Kidman describes this offroader, which follows the High Weald on the Kent-Sussex border

START A short walk from Ashurst railway station takes you to the village hall – race HQ. You begin in a field just over the border into Kent, but most of the race takes place in East Sussex.

MILE 1 You'll be able to ease in with a speedy downhill section. As you head through fields you will follow the course of the river Medway.

MILE 3 After tackling muddy fields early on, you can now enjoy the firmer surface of the Forest Way Country Park trail. It's a 10-mile route for cyclists, walkers and runners.

MILE 4 Still on the pathway, you skirt the village of Hartfield, where AA Milne, the author of Winnie the Pooh, lived.

MILE 6 You now leave the Forest Way and follow a driveway that takes you to the race's first checkpoint, at Ashdown School. London mayor Boris Johnson and actor Damian Lewis (A) are among its former pupils.

MILE 9 You are on the fringes of Ashdown Forest. You ascend to the High Weald Landscape Trail (B), where you'll be rewarded with a commanding view across this stunning Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

MILE 11 After rejoining the Forest Way, you pass through the tiny hamlet of Balls Green, which neighbours the village of Withyham.

MILE 12 The hill you enjoyed coming down on your way out is now a short, sharp climb, with an ascent of 60m; this is the steepest challenge on the course.

FINISH After you cross the line and get your medal, head to the vegan food van for a beetroot and chickpea burger.

INSIDE TRACK

John Kidman says: 'This race is one of a series of four. My partner Hannah and myself got into trail races when we were living in London. Whenever we wanted to do one, we had to make it into a big ordeal and stay somewhere overnight because we didn't have easy access to a car. We thought there must be an easier way to do races in the countryside. So we worked out four routes that were north (Essex), south (East Sussex), east (Kent) and west (Buckinghamshire) of London. All are less than an hour from the capital by train. We mapped out some great courses and offered a 10K, half and full marathon at each event. Our first races were in 2014 and proved very popular. Each event offers a medal that represents a compass point. If you do all four you can piece them together like a jigsaw.'

● **Run it** The 2016 race is on January 23. For more details, visit trailscape.co.uk

THE RUNDOWN

Rail to Trail: south half marathon
(2014 stats) Kent/
East Sussex

First man Ben Hall
1:30:48

First woman Emilie
Pottle 2:03:17

No. of finishers 92 (100%)



Finishing stats

● 1:30-1:45 9%
● 1:45-2:00 12%
● 2:00-2:15 31%
● 2:15-2:30 27%
● 2:30-3:00 16%
● 3:00-3:30 5%





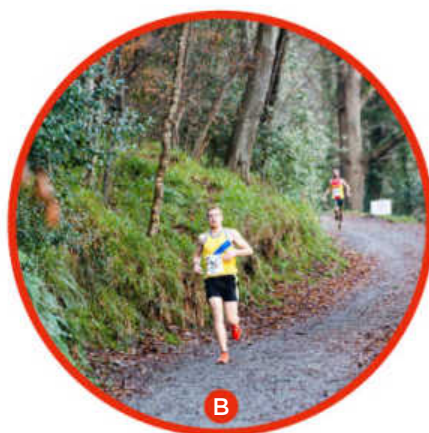
MORRISON'S GREAT EDINBURGH WINTER RUN

ROAD - TOWN - FLAT

When January 9

Where Edinburgh

During this invigorating 5K, which begins in Holyrood Park, you'll pass St Margaret's Loch, St Anthony's Chapel and Dunsapie Loch as you run up and around Arthur's Seat. The weather may be a mite nippy but this is still a fantastic way to kick off your new running year. It's open to runners aged 14 and over.



RUN FOREST RUN! KILBRONEY

TRAIL - ROAD

When January 2

Where County Down

Race organisers Born to Run are a dab hand at putting on a good show or, as they'd have it, 'great races in great places', such as this fast 10K through Rostrevor's country lanes and forest paths. The chip timing, chunky medals and post-race refreshments make this even more impressive for the £19 entry fee.



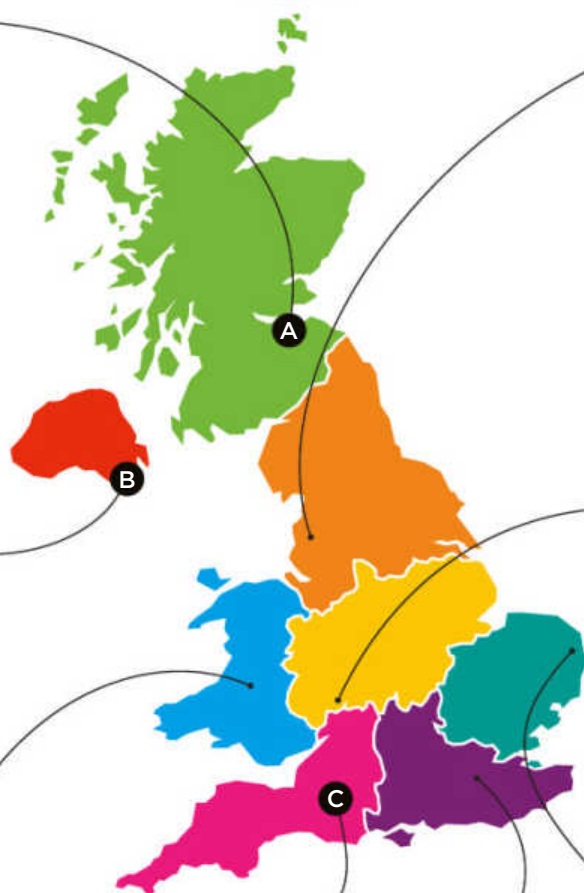
INSKIP HALF MARATHON

ROAD - RURAL - FLAT

When January 17

Where Preston, Lancashire

The welcoming spirit and the tasty hotpot at the end will help you ward off the January blues after this fast and mostly flat race, which is perfect for PB hunters. The weather in Lancashire at this time of year can certainly test you, but the support as you near the finish line will give you a boost when you most need it.



NAUNTON NEARLY 19

RURAL - HILLY - TRAIL

When January 10

Where Gloucestershire

An 18.3 mile loop that takes in the River Eye and some lovely villages - a perfect long run if you're building up to a marathon. Firm, runner-friendly ground, gentle downhill slopes and complimentary confectionery at each checkpoint will give you the spring you need to take on the total ascent of 440m over five hills of varying steepness.

BUFF WINTER TRAIL WALES

TRAIL - RURAL - HILLY

When January 23

Where Snowdonia National Park

This is a wintery, undulating half-marathon challenge across the tracks and trails of Coed y Brenin Forest Park. You could experience snow, frost or mud, but it's worth it for the stunning scenery alone. Then there's the complimentary Buff product and commemorative thermal mug, which will be filled with tea or soup to warm you up.

ROUGH 'N' TUMBLE 10

HILLY - RURAL - MULTI-TERRAIN

When January 10

Where Milton Lilbourne, Wiltshire

A challenging but satisfying 10.4-mile trek starting in Milton Lilbourne village and taking you along grassy footpaths, up hill and down dale, and it features a fierce incline to Giant's Grave promontory fort. Watch out for Chalkpit Lane (it can be awfully muddy) and keep yourself going with thoughts of the ginger cake waiting for you at the finish line.

TRIONUM KNACKER CRACKER 10K

TRAIL - RURAL - HILLY -

When January 1

Where Box Hill, Surrey

If 2015's four 'ruddy great hills' weren't enough, 2016 provides five peaks to conquer in this tough New Year's Day jaunt that offers great views across the North Downs. The Eiger Steps hill has returned, allegedly by popular demand, which means either the race director is telling porkies or you're all gluttons for punishment. Fancy dress is encouraged.

FREETHORPE TEN

ROAD - RURAL - HILLY

When January 31

Where Norfolk

The remarkably efficient organisation and scenic route make this an annual community favourite - there were over 500 participants last year - and all for a modest £17. On good country roads you'll head out of Freethorpe, south through Reedham and past the River Yare, before heading back to race HQ, where there'll be plenty of warming food and drink.



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Mens Ultra Boost ST / £129.99 W212487
Collegiate Navy



Women's Ultra Boost ST / £129.99 W215519
Sun Glow



Mens Ultra Boost ST / £129.99 W212487
Eqt Blue



Women's Ultra Boost ST / £129.99 W215519
Core Black

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Women's Ultra Boost / £129.99 | W215518
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Mens Ultra Boost / £129.99 | W210203
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Women's Ultra Boost / £129.99 | W215518
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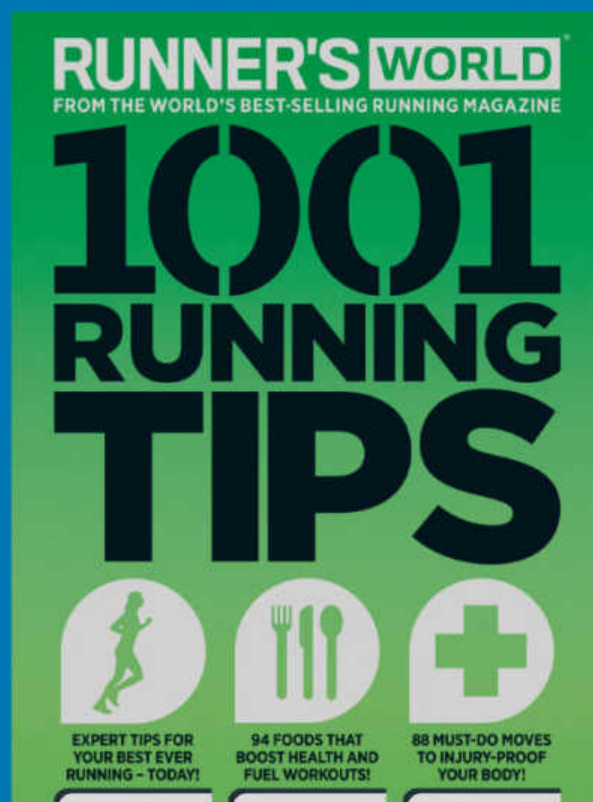


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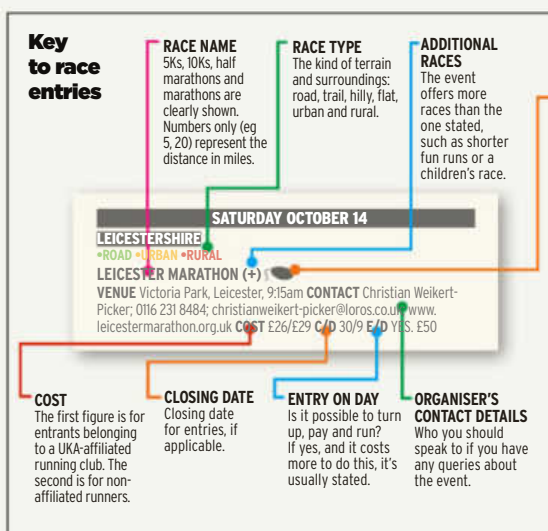
RACE FINDER

THE BEST UK EVENTS IN JANUARY

How to use Race Finder

It's pretty easy – just follow the key below. Calendars at the ready!

Race Finder lists UK races that take place during the month stated on the cover, at the least. This issue features races from **Friday January 1 to Sunday February 14**. Simply look up when you want to race and find that day's events listed by region. Info is provided by race organisers and may be edited because of space. Find more extensive listings and an interactive search tool at runnersworld.co.uk/ events. Just log on and sign up!



RW online entry

Signing up for events marked with this flash couldn't be simpler.

- ▶ Go to runnersworld.co.uk/events and search for the race you want to enter by name.
- ▶ Click 'Enter Online'.
- ▶ Select the category of race you wish to enter (whether you are affiliated to a running club or non-affiliated).
- ▶ Enter your details and pay online.
- ▶ Then you'll be sent a confirmation email. It's as simple as that.

WOODCOTE 10K
VENUE Woodcote Village Hall, Reading Road, Woodcote, Reading, 10:30am **CONTACT** Dick Hoskins; 0118 984 2660; rivhoskins@aol.com; www.woodcote10k.org.uk **COST** £14/£16 C/D 4/1 E/D YES, £18

WILTSHIRE
•TRAIL •RURAL
ROUGH 'N' TUMBLE 10
VENUE Milton Lilbourne Village Hall, Marlborough, 11am **CONTACT** Stephen Goulding; 07534 997 795; 01672 851 670; gouldings@waitrose.com; www.grassrootsevents.co.uk **COST** £12/£14 C/D 7/1 E/D NO

SATURDAY JANUARY 16

HAMPSHIRE
•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY
HELL DOWN SOUTH
VENUE Longmoor Camp, South Downs National Park, Hampshire, 10am **CONTACT** Trail Plus; 03332 400 616; info@trailplus.com; hellrunner.co.uk/ **COST** £25 E/D NO

LANCASHIRE
•TRAIL •RURAL
PETZL NIGHT RUNNER - RIVINGTON
VENUE Rivington and Blackrod High School, Horwich, 7pm **CONTACT** Chris Kitchen; info@epicevents.co.uk; www.thenightrunner.com **COST** £25 E/D NO

SUNDAY JANUARY 17

AVON
•TRAIL •RURAL
BATH SKYLINE 10KM (RACE 3 OF 4) (+)
VENUE University of Bath, Bath, 11am **CONTACT** Tom Room; tom@relishrunninggraces.com; www.relishrunninggraces.com/bath-skyline-10km.php **COST** £16/£18 E/D YES, +£2

CHESHIRE
•ROAD •RURAL
FOUR VILLAGES HALF MARATHON
VENUE Helsby Sports Club, Chester Rd, Helsby, 10:30am **CONTACT** Race Director; runners@helsbyrunningclub.org.uk; helsbyrunningclub.org.uk **COST** £20/£22 E/D NO

DORSET
•TRAIL •RURAL
THE DIRTY DEVIL STAMPEDE (+)
VENUE Bovington Tank Range, Bovington, Noon **CONTACT** Mark Steen; 07752 902 080; mark@bustinskin.com **COST** TBC

ESSEX
•TRAIL •RURAL
BENFLEET 15 (+)
VENUE HQ, Hadleigh, 10:30am **CONTACT** Terry Spooner; 07885 837 324; benfleeentries@benfleeetrunningclub.com; www.benfleeetrunningclub.com/benfleeet15 **COST** £18/£20 C/D 10/1 E/D YES, £20

LONDON
•TRAIL •FLAT
THE 5TH NICE WORK BUSHY PARK 10K SERIES (+)
VENUE Bushy Park, Hampton, 10am **CONTACT** Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk **COST** £16/£18 C/D 13/1 E/D YES, £20

MERSEYSIDE
•ROAD •TRAIL •FLAT
CANCER RESEARCH UK LIVERPOOL WINTER RUN
VENUE Liverpool, 9am **CONTACT** Human Race; 020 8391 3913; races@humanrace.co.uk; winterrunseries.co.uk/ **COST** -

SURREY
•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY
DENBIES 10M
VENUE Denbies Wine Estate, London Road, Dorking, 10am **CONTACT** Nicky Donbavand; 07855 926 714; info@eventstolive.co.uk; www.eventstolive.co.uk **COST** £17/£19 C/D 10/1 E/D YES, £25

FRIDAY JANUARY 1

KENT
•TRAIL •RURAL
THE LAMBERHURST NEW YEAR'S DAY 10K (+)
VENUE Lamberhurst Village Hall, (just off the A21), Lamberhurst, 11am **CONTACT** Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk **COST** £14/£16 C/D 21/12 E/D YES, +£2

SURREY
•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY
TRIONUM KNACKER CRACKER 10K
VENUE The Old Fort, Top of Box Hill, Box Hill, 11am **CONTACT** Robert McCaffrey; knackercracker@trionum.com; www.trionum.com/knackercracker **COST** £34/£36 C/D 1/1 E/D NO

SUSSEX
•TRAIL •RURAL
HANGOVER 5M (+)
VENUE Hillbarn recreation ground, Hillbarn Lane, Worthing, 11:30am **CONTACT** Harris David; 01903 716 920; 07942 816 507; dharris@uwclub.net; www.goring-roadrunners.org.uk **COST** £3/£4 C/D 11/12 E/D YES, £5

YORKSHIRE
•TRAIL •RURAL
HARDMOORS 30 (+)
VENUE Fylingdales Village Hall, Station Road, Robin Hoods Bay, 9am **CONTACT** Jonathan Steele; 01937 830 677; 07909 797 872; info@hardmoors10.org.uk; www.hardmoors10.org.uk **COST** -

SATURDAY JANUARY 2

DERBYSHIRE
•ROAD •FLAT
NO WALK IN THE PARK 5K (+)
VENUE Queen's Park, Cricket Pavilion, Chesterfield, 9:30am **CONTACT** Colin Sinnott; 01246 864 361; 07749 860 685; nderbysrc@yahoo.co.uk; northderbysirc.jimdo.com **COST** £3/£5 E/D ONLY

LONDON
•ROAD
QEOP WINTER 10KM SERIES
VENUE Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, 9:30am **CONTACT** Craig Thornton; 07740 554 190; info@theraceorganiser.com; www.qeopaces.com **COST** £15/£17 E/D YES

SUNDAY JANUARY 3

DEVON
•TRAIL •RURAL

AXMOUTH CHALLENGE (+)
VENUE Axmouth Village Hall, Axmouth, Axmouth, 10am **CONTACT** Richard Gush; 1297 22340; rgush@btinternet.com; www.axeavalleymrunners.org.uk/ **COST** £8/£10 C/D 27/12 E/D YES

HAMPSHIRE
•TRAIL
SOMERLEY CHARITY 10K (+)
VENUE Somerley Estate, Ringwood, 11am **CONTACT** Becky Chalk; 01202 703 198; fundraising@autismwessex.org.uk; autismwessex.org.uk/event_calendar/view/somerley-10k-fun-run **COST** £15 C/D 31/12 E/D YES, +£5

YORKSHIRE
•TRAIL •RURAL
OXSPRING HUNSHLF AMBLE
VENUE Waggon & Horses Pub, Sheffield Road, Oxspring, Sheffield, 10:30am **CONTACT** Steve Dickinson; 01226 370 648; 07850 445 613; steve@osi.uk.com **COST** £5/£7 C/D 31/12 E/D YES

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6

LEICESTERSHIRE
•ROAD
THE 3RD LEICESTER CITY 5K WINTER SERIES RACE THREE
VENUE Victoria Park, London Road, Leicester, 7:30pm **CONTACT** Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk **COST** £9/£11 E/D YES, +£1

THURSDAY JANUARY 7

KENT
•ROAD
THE GRAVESEND FLOODLIT 10K SERIES (+)
VENUE Cyclopark, The Tollgate, Wrotham Road, Gravesend, 7:30pm **CONTACT** Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; info@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk **COST** £9/£11 E/D YES, +£2

SUNDAY JANUARY 10

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
•TRAIL
CLIVEN CROSS COUNTRY
VENUE National Trust, Cliveden House, Taplow, 10am **CONTACT** Nicholas Cole; cliveden@burnhamjoggers.org.uk; burnhamjoggers.org.uk/clivedenxc/ **COST** £14/£16 E/D YES, +£2

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
•TRAIL •RURAL
NAUNTON NEARLY 19
VENUE Naunton Village Hall, Naunton, 9:30am **CONTACT**

Kurt Dusterhoff; info@cotswoldrunning.co.uk; www.cotswoldrunning.co.uk **COST** £23/£25 E/D NO

LONDON
•TRAIL •RURAL
SECOND SUNDAY 5 MILES
VENUE Richardson Evans Memorial Fields, Wimbledon, 9:30am **CONTACT** David Symons; dssymons@hotmail.com; www.secondsunday5.com **COST** £3/£5 E/D YES

•ROAD
THE MORNINGTON CHASERS REGENT'S PARK GRAND PRIX 10K WINTER SERIES RACE FOUR
VENUE Regent's Park, Start location is near The Hub, London, 9:10am **CONTACT** Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk **COST** £15/£17 C/D 30/9 E/D YES, £20

•TRAIL
THE NICE WORK RICHMOND PARK 10K SERIES RACE ONE (+)
VENUE Richmond Park, Race starts adjacent to the car park at the Sheen Gate entrance, London, 10am **CONTACT** Martin Burke; 01797 230 572; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk **COST** £16/£18 E/D YES, £20

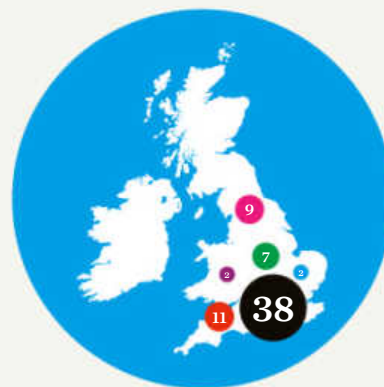
OXFORDSHIRE
•ROAD •RURAL •HILLY

Where's the action?

January's 69 events broken down by region

North / 9
 Midlands / 7
 East / 2
 South / 38
 Southwest / 11
 Wales / 2

(No RW listings in Scotland or NI at time of going to press)



THURSDAY JANUARY 21

AVON

•ROAD •TRAIL •FLAT
WESTON PROM 5M - RACE 5 OF 9
VENUE Bay Cafe, Tropicana, Marine Parade, Weston-super-mare, 7:30pm CONTACT Malcolm Gammon; promrun@westonac.co.uk; www.westonac.co.uk/promrun COST £4/£6 C/D 2/1 E/D YES, +£2

WALES

•TRAIL •RURAL
NIGHT RACE - CHEPSTOW RACE COURSE
VENUE Chepstow Race Course, Chepstow, 7:15pm CONTACT Paul Dodd; admin@rogueeruns.com; www.rogueeruns.co.uk COST £8/£10 C/D 14/1 E/D YES, +£2

SATURDAY JANUARY 23

BERKSHIRE

•ROAD •RURAL •FLAT
WINDSOR & ETON WINTER 20KM (+) - DORNEY LAKE, WINDSOR (+)
VENUE Eton College Rowing Centre (2012 Olympic Rowing Venue), Dorney Lake, Windsor, 12:15pm CONTACT Martyn Edwards; 07909 915 444; enquiries@hotmail.co.uk; www.f3events.co.uk COST £20 E/D NO

KENT

•TRAIL •RURAL
TRAILSCAPE RAIL TO TRAIL SERIES SOUTH: MARATHON (+)
VENUE Ashurst McDermott Village Hall, Ashurst Road, Ashurst, 8:30am CONTACT Hannah Osborne; info@trailscapel.co.uk; www.trailscapel.co.uk COST £40 E/D NO

SUNDAY JANUARY 24

CORNWALL

•ROAD •RURAL
STORM FORCE 10
VENUE Camborne Science & International Academy, Cranberry Road, Camborne, 10:30am CONTACT Caz Vinicombe; 07790 895 754; carnrunners@hotmail.co.uk; carnrunners.co.uk COST £12/£14 C/D 8/1 E/D YES, +£2

LONDON

•ROAD •FLAT
VICTORIA PARK 10KM
VENUE Grove Road, Bow, London, 9:30am CONTACT Craig Thornton; 07740 554 190; info@theraceorganiser.com; www.theraceorganiser.com COST £14/£16 E/D YES

OXFORDSHIRE

•TRAIL •FLAT
OXFORD 10K
VENUE Horspath Athletics Track, Horspath Road, Oxford, 10am CONTACT Mark Caswell; 0797 783 1519; mark.caswell11@btinternet.com; mcccpromotions.com COST £14 E/D YES

WARWICKSHIRE

•ROAD •RURAL •HILLY
TEMPO 10K WINTER ROAD RACE 4
VENUE Ilmington Sports & Social Club, Mickleton Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, 10:30am CONTACT Sarah Bland; 07540 287 781; 01789 267 337; 07717 795 333; info@tempoevents.co.uk; www.tempoevents.co.uk/running/offas-dyke/offas-dyke.php COST £10/£12 E/D YES, +£2

TUESDAY JANUARY 26

AVON

•ROAD •RURAL •FLAT
AZTEC WEST FAST 5K
VENUE Aztec Centre, Aztec Business Park, Bristol, 7:30pm CONTACT Christopher Elson; 0117 973 3391; 07807 542 432; c.j.elson@bristol.ac.uk; bristolandwestac.org.uk COST £5/£7 E/D ONLY

SATURDAY JANUARY 30

SURREY

•TRAIL •RURAL
RUN RICHMOND PARK 10K RACE 1 2016 (+)
VENUE Richmond Park, Sheen Lane, Richmond, 10:10am CONTACT David Krangel; 020 8144 0797; 07919 141 534; info@thefixevents.com; thefixevents.com/run-richmond-park-5k-and-10k-race-1-2016 COST £17 C/D 15/1 E/D YES, +£5

YORKSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL
NO EGO CHALLENGE HEAD TORCH RACE (DALBY FOREST)
VENUE Dalby Forest, OS Grid ref: SE855 878, Pickering, 6:15pm CONTACT Brian Lee; info@noegochallenge.com; www.noegochallenge.com COST £13 E/D YES, +£3

SUNDAY JANUARY 31

ESSEX

•TRAIL •RURAL
THE HADLEIGH 2012 LEGACY 10K
VENUE Hadleigh Country Park, Chapel Lane, Hadleigh, 10:30am CONTACT Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; 01797 230 572; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk COST £13/£15 C/D 26/1 E/D YES, £18

HAMPSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY

RUBIX CHILLY HILLY

VENUE Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Gravel Hill, Horndean, 11am CONTACT Kiernan Easton; 07872 569 558; kiernan.easton@sky.com; www.pjc.org.uk COST £15/£17 C/D 24/1 E/D YES, +£3

LONDON

•ROAD •FLAT
CANCER RESEARCH UK LONDON WINTER RUN
VENUE Trafalgar Square, London, 9am CONTACT Human Race; 020 8391 3913; matthew.newton@humanrace.co.uk; winterunseries.co.uk/ COST £39.50

•ROAD •FLAT

HYDE PARK 10K
VENUE Hyde Park, London, 9:30am CONTACT Craig Thornton; 07740 554 190; info@theraceorganiser.com; www.theraceorganiser.com COST £14/£16 E/D YES

NORFOLK

•ROAD •RURAL
FREETHORPE TEN
VENUE Freethorpe Village Hall, School Road, Freethorpe, Norwich, 11am CONTACT Pat Brightman; 01493 733 735; 07801 689 092; gydacracers@btconnect.com; www.gydac.co.uk COST £12/£14 C/D 27/1 E/D YES, +£6

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

•TRAIL
HOLDENBY XC RUN 2016
VENUE Holdenby House, Holdenby, Northampton, 9:30am CONTACT Ashley Edwards; info@skeddaddevents.co.uk; www.skeddaddevents.co.uk COST £18 C/D 24/1 E/D YES, +£2

WALES

•ROAD •RURAL •FLAT
LLISWERRY 8 2016
VENUE Newport Stadium, Newport International Sports Village, Newport, 11:30am CONTACT Chris Gentle; chrisgentle@lliswerryrunners.com; www.lliswerryrunners.com COST £13/£15 E/D NO

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 3

LEICESTERSHIRE

•ROAD
THE 3RD LEICESTER CITY 5K WINTER SERIES RACE FOUR
VENUE Victoria Park, London Road, Leicester, 7:30pm CONTACT Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk COST £9/£11 E/D YES, +£1

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 4

KENT

•ROAD
THE GRAVESEND FLOODLIT 10K SERIES (+)
VENUE Cyclopark, The Tollgate, Wrotham Road, Gravesend, 7:30pm CONTACT Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; 01797 230 572; info@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk COST £9/£11 E/D YES, +£2

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 6

DERBYSHIRE

•ROAD •FLAT
NO WALK IN THE PARK 5K (+)
VENUE Queen's Park, Cricket Pavilion, Chesterfield, 9:30am CONTACT Colin Sinnott; 01246 864 361; 07749 860 685; nwbysrc@yahoo.co.uk; northderbyshirc.jimdo.com/ COST £3/£5 E/D ONLY

DEVON

•TRAIL •RURAL
ENDURANCELIFE CTS SOUTH DEVON (+)
VENUE Beesands, Kingsbridge, 7am CONTACT James Barker; 01548 312 314; support@endurancelife.com; www.endurancelife.com/event-new.asp?series=82 COST £30 E/D NO

DURHAM

•TRAIL •RURAL
NO EGO CHALLENGE HEAD TORCH RACE (DURHAM)
VENUE Lambton Castle, Chester Le Street, 6:15am CONTACT Brian Lee; info@noegochallenge.com; www.noegochallenge.com COST £13 E/D YES, +£3

LONDON

•ROAD
QEOP WINTER 10KM SERIES
VENUE Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, 9:30am CONTACT Craig Thornton; 07740 554 190; info@theraceorganiser.com; www.qeopaces.com COST £15/£17 E/D YES

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7

CHESHIRE

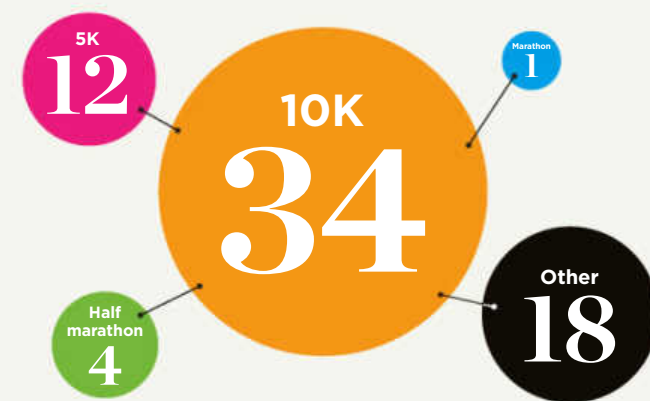
•ROAD •RURAL •FLAT
BROOKS ALSAGER 5
VENUE Alsager Leisure Centre, Hassell Road, Alsager, 11am CONTACT ken rushton; 01782 330 853; 07795 567 799; kenrushton54@gmail.com; www.alsager5.co.uk COST £13.50/£15.50 C/D 1/2 E/D YES, +£1.50

DORSET

•ROAD •RURAL
24TH BLACKMORE VALE LIONS HALF MARATHON

Going the distance

January's 69 events broken down by distance



(+)

VENUE Playing Fields, Bishops Caundle, Near Sherborne, 11am CONTACT Colin MacLeod; 01258 471 883; bvlhalfm@gmail.com; www.bvlhalfm.yolasite.com COST £13/£15 C/D 3/2 E/D NO

•TRAIL •RURAL

THE PORTLAND COASTAL MARATHON (+)
VENUE The National Sailing Academy, Portland, 9am CONTACT Mark Steen; 07752 902 080; mark@bustinskin.com; www.bustinskin.com COST £40 E/D NO

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY
MAY HILL MASSACRE
VENUE May Hill, Newent Road, Huntley Nr Gloucester, 10am CONTACT Andy Moxley; 01242 890 604; 07779 405 574; trimaxevents@hotmail.co.uk; www.trimaxevents.com COST £15 C/D 1/2 E/D YES, +£10

HERTFORDSHIRE

•ROAD •RURAL
WATFORD HALF MARATHON
VENUE Sandycroft Park, Watford, 10:30am CONTACT half@watfordharriers.org.uk; www.watfordharriers.org.uk COST £21/£23 C/D 23/1 E/D NO

KENT

•ROAD •RURAL
ASHFORD & DISTRICT 10K
VENUE Cassiobury Park, Watford, 10:30am CONTACT Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; info@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk COST £15/£17 E/D YES, £20

LINCOLNSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL
CAYTHORPE DASH HALF MARATHON
VENUE Hammond Pavilion, Old Lincoln Road, Caythorpe, Grantham, 11am CONTACT David Dorey; 01400 272 015; 07972 726 233; pifcommittee2014@gmail.com; www.caythorpe.org COST £40 E/D YES

LONDON

•ROAD
THE MORNINGTON CHASERS REGENT'S PARK GRAND PRIZ 10K WINTER SERIES RACE FIVE
VENUE Regent's Park, Start location is near The Hub, London, 9:10am CONTACT Martin Burke; 01797 230 009; martin@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk COST £15/£17 C/D 3/2 E/D YES, £20

SURREY

•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY
BOOKHAM 10K
VENUE Polesden Lacey Infant School, Oakdene Close, Bookham, 10am CONTACT Nicky Donbavand; 0845 263 8801; info@eventstolive.co.uk; www.eventstolive.co.uk COST £16/£18 C/D 24/1 E/D YES, £23

•TRAIL •FLAT

NONSUCH PARK 10K
VENUE Nonsuch Mansions, Ewell Road, Cheam, 10:30am CONTACT Mark Caswell; 0797 783 1519; mark.caswell11@btinternet.com; www.mcccpromotions.com COST £14 E/D YES

SUSSEX

•ROAD •RURAL
CHICHESTER PRIORY 10K RACE
VENUE Northgate Car Park, Chichester, 10am CONTACT Bob Syme; 07850 398 950; bob.syme10@gmail.com; www.chichester10k.race.org.uk COST £17/£19 C/D 22/1 E/D NO

WALES

•ROAD •RURAL
LLANDUDNO NICK BEER 10K
VENUE Promenade Llandudno, Venue Cymru, Llandudno, Noon CONTACT Race Secretary 07967 119 601; Kay@Hutton410.fsnet.co.uk; www.nwrrc.co.uk COST £14/£16 E/D YES, +£1

WILTSHIRE

•ROAD •RURAL
LONGLEAT 10K
VENUE Longleat, Warminster, 10am CONTACT Mike Gratton; 01252 373 797; 07921 783 613; info@209events.com; www.209events.com COST £17/£19 C/D 1/2 E/D NO

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 14

AVON

•TRAIL •RURAL
BATH SKYLINE 10KM (RACE 4 OF 4) (+)
VENUE University of Bath, Bath, 11am CONTACT Tom Room; tom@relishrunninggraces.com; www.relishrunninggraces.com/bath-skyline-10km.php COST £16/£18 E/D YES, +£2

BERKSHIRE

•ROAD •RURAL
BRAMLEY 20/10 10M
VENUE Bramley Primary School, Basingstoke, 10:30am CONTACT Reading Roadrunner; 01782 384 170; bramley2010@frsystems.co.uk; Readingroadrunners.org COST £21/£23 C/D 1/2 E/D NO

•TRAIL •RURAL

THE 7TH READING 5 MILE
VENUE Reading University Students' Union, Whiteknights Campus, Reading, 11am CONTACT Martin Burke; 0797 230 009; info@nice-work.org.uk; www.nice-work.org.uk COST £12/£14 C/D 10/2 E/D YES, +£2

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL
HARDWICK X-STREAM 2016
VENUE Manor House Farm, Hardwick, Aylesbury, 11am CONTACT Corinne Rodgers; 07825 030 398; corinnelydia@aol.com; www.bearbrookrunningclub.co.uk COST £11/£13 C/D 7/2 E/D YES, £14/£15

DORSET

•ROAD •RURAL •HILLY
LYTCHETT MANOR 10
VENUE Lytchett Manor Sports Centre, Lytchett Minster School, Poole, 10:30am CONTACT Judith Vlaarkamp; 07772 145 152; lytchett10@lytchettmanorstriders.org; lytchettmanorstriders.org COST £12/£14 C/D 7/2 E/D YES, +£2

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL •HILLY
DURSLEY DOZEN
VENUE Rednock sports centre, Rednock Drive, Dursley, 10:30am CONTACT Graeme Hawkins; 01453 890 463; 07952 161 255; Gr@emehawkins.co.uk; www.dursleyac.org.uk/cms/ COST £13/£15 E/D NO

HAMPSHIRE

•TRAIL •RURAL •FLAT
PORTSMOUTH COASTAL HALF MARATHON
VENUE The Pyramids Centre, Clarence Esplanade, Portsmouth, 9:45am CONTACT Rob Piggott; 07780 675 747; fitprorob@hotmail.com; https://fitprorob.primo-solutions.co.uk/ps/event/ PortsmouthCoastalHalfMarathon2016 COST £25 E/D YES, +£5

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Sandi Thom

The singer-songwriter, 34, on being overly competitive and why running is an adventure

At school in Scotland I was a slightly chubby kid who hid behind a shed when my classmates did cross-country. I would only pop out once they had run a lap. I was never into athletics in any shape or form.

I started running after moving to the US. I lived in Malibu, California, for five years, until October 2015. While there, I hired a personal trainer to teach me how to run. I wanted to start running for many reasons, including fitness, self-esteem and confidence. And I wanted to be more active.

My first goal was to run from my house to the local Starbucks. At first, I'd stop for a glass of water before heading back. It was 3.5 miles in total, with a big hill to climb on the return run. I was really chuffed when I could easily run the route.

I got obsessed and began exploring the canyons in Malibu. Going up Bonsall Canyon you climb to about 1,000ft up sandy, rocky paths. It was really hardcore, but hugely rewarding at the same time.

I also used to enjoy a nine-mile circuit. I often saw Flea, the bass player with the Red Hot Chili Peppers, out running.

I've done a few half marathons, but mainly I run 5Ks and 10Ks. I get really competitive and try to run much too fast, trying to overtake runners who are better than I am.

I always treat going for a run like heading out on a little adventure. Once, after I was back in Scotland, I went for a short jaunt and ended up doing 17 miles. My mum was about to send out a search party, but my tour manager eventually found me.



TAKING STEPS
Sandi always feels better after a run

'When I run, everything about me works 100 per cent more efficiently'

At times in my life I've been super-fit and at other times really unfit. So I know now that when I run, everything about me works 100 per cent more efficiently. I feel happier, perform better and can even string together a more polished sentence.

I'm into running on my own. A thousand things are going round my head, but I really like it as my time to think and escape.

Thanks to various techie gadgets I can be anywhere and still find a run to do. It's great using apps to find somewhere to run if I'm in a town or city anywhere in the world while I'm on tour.

I will always run. As well as really enjoying being out there, it can stop me from becoming lethargic. Running gives me the momentum to take on a challenge, be it a running one or in life in general.

My first baby is due in March. I continued to run during the first half of my pregnancy, but mainly I stuck to the treadmill. I don't think I'm going to be one of those mums with a running buggy. I reckon that, instead, I will strap the baby to my back. It will be like doing a resistance session!

● Sandi's new album, *Weapons of Past Destruction*, is due for release in February. Visit sandithom.com

MY FAVOURITE...



Hero

Eddie Izzard, for all his marathons [43 in 51 days in 2009]. I stayed in the same hotel as him when he was playing at a festival recently. I was too shy to speak to him.



Music

After learning about the app FIT Radio I run to drum-and-bass music, which is perfect, as it is 165 beats per minute. You soon get into a rhythm and a meditative state.



Running shoes

I wear Nike Free trainers, which feel very low to the ground. At first I felt flat-footed and it seemed harder to run. But now I think they actually help my running.

Women's Health

A woman with dark hair pulled back is posing on a series of white, angular geometric blocks. She is wearing a bright lime green sports bra, leggings with a bold red and black tiger print, black athletic gloves, and black sneakers with white accents. She is leaning back with one leg raised, looking over her shoulder at the camera.

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